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Midwest China Oral History Interviews

Beatrice Exner Liu

BEATRICE EXNER LIU

ORAL HISTORY ABSTRACT

BORN: 1907, Northfield, Minnesota.

EARLY LIFE: educational background; accepts position at Hopei Women's Normal College, Tientsin as English/French teacher.

CHINA EXPERIENCES: Japanese subversive activities in Manchuria/Mongolia area, 1930s; description of trip through Mongolia, 1937; cause of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, 1937; Japanese military activity before and after Incident in Peking area; trip to British Concession in Tientsin for safety; using status as an American to aid Chinese; trip to Nanking to reunite with husband, 1937; experience with American diplomats in Nanking, 1937; trip to Hankow to escape Japanese occupation of Nanking, 1937; meets husband's family, the Lius; trip to Chungking to escape Japanese, 1938; as English teacher at Soviet Embassy in Chungking; response to Soviet diplomats; life in Chungking during Japanese bombing attacks; dealings with Kuomintang secret police; the struggle against rats; memories of Percy Watson; as staff member of the International Relief Committee (IRC); IRC problems obtaining medical supplies and fundings; inflation in Kweiyang, early 1940s; living in Hua Ch'i; work with American Library Association; work with International Refugee Organization (IRO); husband's experience with Communists obtaining exit permit from Shanghai; memory of train trip interrupted.

INTERVIEWER: Sarah Refo Mason

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+ Complementary archival and museum material from Beatrice Exner Liu is also housed in the Midwest China Oral History, Archives, and Museum Collection.

INTERVIEW

INTERVIEWER: Would you want to tell us a little bit about your background in Northfield?

LIU: I was born in Northfield, Minnesota, in 1907, and grew up there. My father taught at Carleton and the campus was almost like a private park for us in the summer. There's nothing too special about it except that we always had some contacts with China. I knew people who were in the Fenchow Mission--the Watsons and the Pyes and Rowland and Laura Cross, and so on. We had some knowledge of them and their doings. When I was in my teens, my eldest brother went to China for three years to teach physics in the Peking Union Medical College. At that time, in the early 20s, they still had a pre-medical department there. While he was still there, my sister went for three years to teach at Yu Ying School in Peking. She became engaged to a Chinese fellow teacher, Chi Shou-yu, who came to Carleton and studied leather chemistry under my father.

They were married and went back to China, where he became the manager of the Lee Sheng Sporting Goods Company in Tientsin. The company made basketballs, tennis rackets, etc., of such excellent quality that they were beginning to find a market in America when the war put a stop to such business.

When I found myself in need of a job during the depression, my sister arranged for me to teach at the Women's Normal College of Hopei in Tientsin. There was no part of the world where I could have gone and found so many ready-made contacts.

I got to China in the summer of 1935. I taught English and French for two years in the Normal College. I was supposed to be a French teacher, but English was what the Chinese wanted to learn.

In February, 1937, I married Wallace Hsing-hwa Liu, a Carleton graduate who was teaching at the Railroad College in Peking. We had four months of peace together before the war began in July. That spring it was common for people to make a trip to Pailingmiao, a temple in the desert of Inner Mongolia, where the Japanese had started an abortive war the previous fall.

The Japanese had sent young army officers to become monks in the Pailingmiao monastery 15 years before. They had spent the intervening time fortifying the area and subverting the Mongol princes. In the fall of 1936 they started a war, as they had done earlier with Manchuria. General Fu Tso-yi, who was governor of Suiyuan Province at that time, organized a sneak attack on the Japanese headquarters in Pailingmiao. When Wallace and I had dinner with him on our trip, he told us about how he sent men 40 miles through deep snow under cover of night to attack the temple at five in the morning. It was totally unexpected and completely successful, and so that chapter of Japanese aggression ended.

During our spring vacation we went with a group of students from my school and from Peking University to visit the temple. It was interesting to see how the Japanese had been working purposefully for so long to do this thing. When we went up, there was still a strong Chinese garrison to make sure they didn't come back. The soldiers were working busily on reforestation and other good projects. We saw them driving out over the desert with trucks full of Standard Oil tins of water and tree seedlings.

I mention this particularly because there is a common impression that Kuomintang soldiers never did anything useful, and that only under the Communists did the army begin to be used to help the people and the land.

This was an interesting trip, but I don't need to go into detail about it now.

I: That would be rather interesting if you care to go into it.

LIU: It was interesting to me the way we traveled. Our group had chartered two third class sleeping cars (three tiers of hard bunks) and a third class dining car plus cook for the trip. These would be hitched to a train and sidetracked wherever we had sightseeing to do. It was really a great way to travel. We visited a Thousand Buddha cave somewhere in Suiyuan--I don't remember the name of it--and a place where there were three small caves, each with a spring inside. One spring was ice cold, another very hot, and the third normal. We went all the way to Pao-T'ou, which was the end of the railroad line at that time. The government was trying to develop a stable population up there and they were sending settlers up to develop an agricultural community in the desert. There were agricultural experts in charge, and poor people were given a subsidy to go there. We saw them getting off a train with their baskets of possessions.

When we got to Suiyuan City, I had just one idea in mind. I wanted to ride a horse. What was the use of coming to Mongolia if I couldn't ride one of the tough little Mongolian ponies? So when an invitation came for our whole group to go to dinner with General Fu Tso-yi, the governor, I said to Wally, "We can skip that. It's phony. It must be a perfunctory gesture arranged by the tour managers. We'll take this chance to look for a horse to ride."

So we went off looking for a horse, and the others went to the dinner. We hadn't gone far before Fu Tso-yi's secretary came charging around town in a car looking for us because the dinner was in my honor. I couldn't figure this out right away, but I pieced the explanation together bit by bit. I didn't know at the time that foreigners were not allowed in that area. This rule had been made, of course, with reference to the Japanese, but the relationship with Japan was such that they couldn't announce that they were excluding Japanese people. They had to exclude all foreigners. The night before we got to Suiyuan our car had been sidetracked and Wally and I had been out walking up and down the tracks. Fu Tso-yi's private car was standing near by and he sent someone to find out who the foreigner was. When he heard that I was a teacher from the Hopei Women's Normal College going to Pailingmiao with her students, he sent orders ahead that nobody was to interfere with me. Then he gave this dinner in my honor, and I was sitting next to him in riding clothes, with Wally on the other side, and we were all very flabbergasted, but we still didn't get a chance to ride a horse.

I: Is this Inner Mongolia?

LIU: Yes.

I: Wasn't there later an incident between the Kuomintang and Russia over Outer Mongolia, or was that in the 40s?

LIU: Yes. That was later after the war. It had nothing to do with this. I didn't know until after I got back to Tientsin that it had been thanks to a special dispensation from Fu Tso-yi that I even finished the trip.

One small sidelight might be interesting. A couple of years before, there had been a scandal about a Chinese student in America, who married an American girl whom he found working in a dime store, His aristocratic family hit the ceiling, brought him back and had him appointed to the most godforsaken place they could think of so he could cool off. So it happened that he was Fu Tso-yi's secretary, who came to take me to the dinner.

I: Was Fu Tso-yi there to handle the colonization project at Pao-t'ou?

LIU: No. He was governor of the province.

I: But the Japanese had been trying to subvert this area for quite some time, hadn't they?

LIU: Yes. They had been working for 15 years among the Mongol princes and had fortified the temple at Pailingmiao. I still have a little clay Buddha about two inches high that came out of the stomach of the big Buddha in the temple. Usually, the big Buddhas had hollow stomachs in which gold and jewels might be hidden. When the fighting broke out and the real monks ran away, they wanted to take these valuables with them so the Japanese wouldn't get them. But when they opened it up, all they found was hundreds and hundreds of these little clay Buddhas. It was a terribly pregnant big Buddha. I still have my little clay Buddha, and it really has very fine details.

I: Were they of value then?

LIU: No, just of interest.

I: How long did you stay?

LIU: We were there just over one night. From Suiyuan City the railroad tour service had arranged for us to go in military trucks across the desert to Pailingmiao. It was a long and dirty day's drive. At first, the road, if it could be called such, lay in a dry river bed. A road of sorts had been made by throwing the larger stones to one side, but the road had become so rutted that the drivers preferred to go off among the stones. Nearly everyone in the truck was sick, except me. The driver distributed Dramamine to help keep things clean. When we finally got out of the river bed and onto the open Gobi Desert, it was easy riding. There was a big wind, and our hair got matted with dust, but we stood up, holding on to the bars over the truck (meant for lashing a tarp over) and singing our heads off.

I: What was the vegetation there? Was it grassland?

LIU: Very scanty grass. The Mongols had all disappeared. They hadn't come back to that area since the trouble. So except for a couple of moth-eaten deserted yurts, we saw nothing of Mongol life.

I: What trouble do you refer to?

LIU: The fighting between the Japanese and the Kuomintang, which I spoke of earlier.

I: So the area was largely unpopulated?

LIU: So far as we could see it was totally unpopulated. We saw a couple of ragged, abandoned yurts, but other wise, nothing. The monks had come back to the temple, and the Chinese garrison at the temple was really working at re-forestation, but there were no Mongols to be seen.

It was partly through seeing the fortifications at the temple that I was able to be the engineer in charge of creating an air-raid shelter at my sister's house, later on.

I did get a chance to ride a horse at the temple. My husband spoke to the colonel in charge and he said I could take a ride on his pony. It was a beautiful buckskin. I got on and it took off across the desert like the wind. It was fantastic. The colonel watched me and got to wondering whether I could control that horse, so he told two men to saddle up and go after me. About the time they were coming out of the gate, I decided I had better come back, so I did.

I: Had you ridden before?

LIU: Oh, yes. That was why I was so eager to ride. I had been crazy about horses for years, so this rounded out a satisfactory trip for me, and we came back and finished the school year.

I: What year was that?

LIU: 1937. Before I finished the school year, Wally left to take a job in the New Life Movement in Nanking. After he was gone, the Luk'ou Chiao Incident (Marco Polo Bridge Incident near Peking) took place. I think this is something that is often misunderstood, because it took so long for people to begin to understand it at the time. The Japanese army was on maneuvers near Fengtai. There had been

many incidents that could have led into fighting, but they always blew over. When this little thing happened, nobody took it too seriously for several days.

I don't know to this day what actually happened. There were many different versions, but it might have been something like this: A Chinese horse strayed onto the Japanese military reservation, and a Chinese soldier went to bring it back. That started it. It was a long time--maybe two weeks--before the newspapers began to do any more than debate, in the lukewarm fashion, whether or not this was war. But we were pretty sure from the start that it was, for reasons that I'll get into.

We were prepared in our minds for something to happen, because we had been watching the construction of a fortress at the entrance to the Japanese Concession in Tientsin. They called it a "sub-police station," but watching the massive construction we called it a "submachine gun station." It dominated the corner where Asahi Road, the main artery, entered the concession. We used to say, "There won't be any serious trouble until they finish building their fort." But now the fort was finished and day after day there was what was called the "floating corpse mystery" in the river. Large numbers of bodies of able-bodied men, not heroin addicts, were being found floating in the river. I think the final conclusion was that these were the workmen who had built the fort, who must be disposed of so that no one would know what it was like inside. Now the fort was finished and my sister and her husband and I (with whom I was staying, now that Wally was in Nanking) had said, "The next incident could be for real."

Our house was in a lane off the Peking Motor Road (Huang Wei Lu) in the part of the city known as Hopei, across the street

from a Paoantui (Peace Preservation Corps) station, and a couple of hundred years from the Institute of Technology. The very day that the incident happened (July 7) my sister saw six Japanese tanks going up the motor road, with their lugs tearing up the roads surface. This would not be done for ordinary maneuvers, so she felt that something was going on. We began monitoring the road and we saw military supplies going up in a steady stream toward Fengtai.

Not only supplies, but men, truckloads of them. Stuff was coming in by rail from Manchuria. I can't remember whether it was the East or Central Railroad Station that was so clogged with Japanese war material that it could no longer handle passengers. Supplies were piling up there faster than the trucks could haul them to the front. We would see convoys of 50 or 60 huge Ford trucks, but they couldn't handle the mass of supplies, so a trainload of Manchurian pony carts and drivers were brought to help out.

I: So there were supplies that had been landed at Tientsin?

LIU: I think they came mostly by train from the north, but I don't doubt they were also coming up the river. Ships can't come up as far as Tientsin. However they came in, they went on by truck or Manchurian cart the rest of the way.

I: But they came from Japan?

LIU: Yes. At first the men were sent up by truck, but soon they needed all the trucks to handle things, so the men walked to the front, about 50 miles. I remember my brother-in-law watching the men marching and saying, "Poor devils! They walk up there and come back in a sack."

The Chinese, meantime, were not well organized for this and had little to do with it, but they made good use of the big swords they had available. The government was not ready to pour its modern equipment into the area, but every blacksmith shop in Tientsin was busily turning out big swords. Just the other day I read in an old Time about how stupid the Chinese were, because instead of using what money they had to buy something modern, they were manufacturing those big swords. But the soldiers made awfully good use of those swords when they had nothing else. The Japanese soldiers wore leather shoes and made an awful noise when they walked. The Chinese wore soft cloth shoes and could sneak up silently in the night with their swords and cut the Japanese heads off. I knew a French army captain who went out to observe and he was full of admiration for the way the Chinese were fighting. He said, "They fight like lions, I tell you, like lions!"

So as we watched and followed the debate in the paper as to whether this was really war, we thought, "What does it take to make a war?" If this isn't war, what is?" Once I saw a column of trucks coming back from the front, moving slowly and avoiding the rough spots in the road and I knew they must be full of wounded. At the back of one truck sat two men, apparently unhurt physically, but with the awful, dead stare that we later learned to call "battle fatigue." In the First World War we had called it "shell shock."

My brother-in-law talked with a ricksha puller who said he had gone to the Japanese Concession to unload sacks, but he couldn't stand it. What kind of sacks? Sacks of dead bodies, often in pieces. The Japanese were paying twenty cents per sack to anyone who would unload them. He could make more in a few minutes that way, than in a week with his ricksha, but he couldn't stand it. The pay was so high because no one wanted to do it. They were having to use people who depended on Japanese sources for their daily heroin, but these were not good workers.

I went ahead with my preparations to leave for Nanking to join Wally. On July 28 I was all packed up and had most of our things in big wooden boxes with iron bands around them. I ordered a truck to take them to the train the next day.

That evening there was something funny in the air. I went out walking and there were people just sitting on their doorsteps, as if they were waiting for something. I didn't catch on at all, and I still don't know whether the people knew anything or just had an uneasy feeling. At two in the morning my brother-in-law came to my room and told me to come out and listen. There was a rifle shot. "That's the municipal government," he said. A shot from the other direction, "That's the Central Station." There were other bursts of rifle fire from other parts of town.

What had happened was that the Chinese had somehow known that there were very few Japanese in the city that day (I forget whether the number I heard was 200 or 600), and they had taken the opportunity to fight their way down the motor road during the night and take possession of the city. When morning came, there was street fighting right around our house. We had to keep the children away from the outer walls and put paper over the windows that opened on the lane. My brother-in-law stuck his head over the wall to see whether the troops on the other side were Chinese or Japanese. They were Chinese, and one of them said, "What are you sticking that big target out here for?" So he jumped back down. The street fighting went on beyond us and by mid-morning, the city was in Chinese hands.

The soldiers were exhausted, hungry and thirsty, but the people had so much fear of Japanese retaliation that they wouldn't give them any help. There were not many soldiers,

and not being able to get food or drink in the city, they were forced to withdraw. By noon we knew there were no more trains to the south and probably never would be. I was busy opening my trunk and suitcases (the iron-bound boxes were hopeless) and trying to assemble the most important things in a form that I could carry myself if I should have a chance to get away. My brother-in-law came again to my door about two o'clock and told me come out.

The whole sky was polka-dotted, as far as you could see, with Japanese planes flying in groups of three, each bomber with two fighters making a V shape. As I watched, they laid down a pattern of bombs all over the city. After that they worked on specific targets all afternoon, with no defense or resistance of any kind. They had only a couple of miles to go outside of the city for fresh bombs at their airport. They went back and forth all afternoon, bombing at will. We were uneasy because there was a Peace Preservation Corps station across the street, but so far as I know, it didn't catch any bombs. I think the nearest ones to us were at the Institute of Technology, a couple of hundred yards away.

That was the day when Nankai University was destroyed. It was a special target because the Nankai students had been violently anti-Japanese. The campus was well-nigh obliterated. A day or two later, an American woman who had been married to a Nankai professor, went out to see what was left. She said that a part of the library had survived the bombing, but they had poured gasoline over the books and burned them. She found a valuable goldfish collection still intact, so she tried to explain to the Japanese guard that it was important and should be cared for. His answer was to tip the jars over and spill the fish on the ground.

About five o'clock the bombing was over. A delegation of neighbors asked my sister and me to call the American Consulate and ask them to come for us and the neighbors would follow closely under the American flag. We doubted whether this would work but we called the consulate. They said, "We can't move and neither can you. Just stay put." Then the neighbors said that if we would walk out with a flag, they'd walk with us. That didn't sound too good either.

I: Where did they want to go?

LIU: Into the foreign concessions, which would be safe. We didn't want to try it. It sounded pretty chancy. But it did give us the idea that it might be a good thing to have an American flag.

At a moment like that you come to understand the meaning of "the stars and stripes forever" in more ways than one. The Japanese have only to sew a red circle on a white ground, and the Frenchman has only to sew together three pieces of cloth: red, white, and blue. But just try to imagine making an American flag in a hurry. I still marvel how we did it.

My sister took one of the baby's diapers, tore it in half, dipped one half in red ink and put it in the oven to dry. Then she took a piece of blue cloth, arranged 48 jagged pieces of white cloth in rows and put one row of machine stitching down each row. By that time, the cloth in the oven was dry. She tore the red and white stripes and was busy sewing them when the consulate called again to emphasize that we should not try to go anywhere. We should try to make ourselves as safe as possible where we were. The flag still lacked one stripe, but it seemed better to leave it that way and work on our defenses. The flag later hung outside the door until it faded, still with 12 stripes.

If there was to be another day of bombing, we wanted an air raid shelter and now I drew on the earthworks I had examined at Pailingmiao to plan something feasible and effective. We lifted paving blocks from the courtyard and dug a hole about four by eight feet and maybe four feet deep. I had my big heavy boxes, bound with iron, that had been ready to ship. By this time I knew that if I got out of there, it would be only with hand luggage. So I said goodbye to my possessions and we put those boxes around three sides of the hole. The fourth side adjoined the covered walkway along the front of the house, so it was sheltered from view on that side. We had the poles that would normally have been used to build a Mongol style canopy over the courtyard in summer. These had been forbidden that year for fear of fires, so we laid the poles over the boxes, laid a heavy tarp over them and piled the earth from the hole over the structure. For the 250 to 500 pound bombs that were being used in those days, this would have been pretty good protection against anything but a direct hit. We went to bed, pretty well worn out.

The next day it poured rain. I didn't see any airplanes that day. I suppose the weather was too bad. But in the morning the consulate called. They said not to go anywhere because they were trying to come for us. About 2 o'clock they finally came. John Stone of the American consulate had asked his friend, Mr. Tanaka, of the Japanese consulate to come with him to get us and they had brought a friend of ours, who worked in the American consulate, to show the way. This car, with three people in it already, was all there was to take us to the concessions. My sister and I and her three-year-old boy and three-month-old baby and a young niece about 13 and a woman servant squeezed into the car, not knowing whether we could ever come back. You can

understand that we took a minimum of luggage. Of course, the baby's diapers had to go. My brother-in-law and a nephew who was a student at the Institute of Technology, stayed behind to take care of things.

I want to express some appreciation for the Japanese vice-consul, Mr. Tanaka, who came for us. It was not easy. The Japanese consular and military elements were at each other's throats at that time, as the diplomatic corps generally opposed the war, and Mr. Tanaka could not know that the military would let him through. If they had not, it would have been a bad loss of face for the consulate.

So we drove off through the pouring rain, by whatever route they could get through. We came up to the Japanese Concession by some back way, not where the fortress was, but the way we had to get through there to get to the French Concession, but the way was blocked by a solid armor-plate gate across the road. The Japanese consul got out and spoke into a little window, and the thing rolled back into the wall like something in a bad movie. We went through and it closed behind us. We got into the French Concession and through that to the British Concession, where we were put into a missionary's home. A woman missionary, whose name I don't even know, had wired from wherever she was spending the summer, that refugees could be put in her home. So we shared the house with a missionary family, about whom the less said the better.

The woman was a daughter of Swedish missionaries. They assimilate into the country and don't go home. This girl had married an American missionary and she was a very sweet person. But the man--I have never known such a completely chicken-livered individual--willing to risk anyone's skin but his own, to save his worldly goods. He sent his

cook back to his house each day to bring down more things, when foreigners could move about freely and Chinese couldn't. One day the cook didn't come back and this character was frantic. What should he do? He supposed it was his duty to go see what had happened to the cook, but how could he? Since I was going to the Chinese city every day, could I go see what had happened to his cook? So I went and found out that the cook had just had an attack of malaria and was okay again. I've probably already said more than I should about Mr. So-and-so, since I can't say anything good.

We were in that mission house a couple of days when my brother-in-law telephoned from the Italian Concession that he had gotten that far with nothing in his hands, losing his bicycle on the way, but he couldn't get any farther. Could we find a way to get him into the British Concession? We inquired around and decided that the best thing was simply to take a taxi and pick him up and come back. The taxi company used White Russian drivers for trips into Japanese controlled territory, because if the driver was Chinese, the Japanese might commandeer the car. With a foreign driver they wouldn't--at that time. So from then on we made big use of taxis with Russian drivers.

I: Were they the only Western drivers then?

LIU: Oh, yes. No other white men would be doing that kind of menial work in China. So, having broken the ground that way, my sister and I found that we could move around fairly freely. We were busy practically night and day for weeks. (The fighting in Tientsin began on July 29, and I think it was August 27 that I finally got away. So for about a month we were constantly on the go doing things that wouldn't be safe for Chinese to do.

I suppose it was a couple of days after my brother-in-law came in, that his nephew, who had been left at the house with a man from the factory, called that the Japanese mopping-up party had stopped at the next house that day, and he expected them early in the morning and he was scared. My sister couldn't very well go because she was nursing a three-month-old baby, so I seemed to be elected. My Chinese still pretty limited, and so was my knowledge of the city map. We had left our 12-striped flag on the door of the house. We walked around half the evening trying to round up an American flag, but without success. Then she remember that in her husband's shop there were some red and white striped polo shirts. We banged at the door of the shop at half past ten, and an apprentice let us in, so we got one of those shirts and made another flag.

Early next morning I found a ricksha man who was eager to go back to Hopei to check up on his own family. With my flag prominently displayed, he pulled me by back ways to the house. When I walked into the yard, there was no air raid shelter! There was a flower bed where it had been. The nephew had heard of families being shot for having such a thing, as it was taken to show that they had sheltered soldiers. So he and the man from the factory, had dismantled the whole thing, washed all the mud off the poles and boxes, put the boxes back in my room and dug up flowers from around the yard to make a flower bed where the hole had been. He was a good, resourceful boy. I took him with me to the concession that day.

My sister had been keeping a scrapbook for years, documenting the Japanese encroachments, but she knew that if it were found it could be serious, so she told me to burn it. I did so, and it is a pity that I did. We didn't know yet how freely we, as foreigners, could move around. If I had been a little more experienced, I would simply have carried it down to the concessions with me.

That was a profitable day in that we got the nephew to safety and we learned more about freedom of action. The mopping-up party never did come to the house. I don't know whether the American flag had anything to do with this.

After that time we were both doing things for our Chinese friends all the time, either escorting people or doing errands for them. I don't know where our strength came from. We used to marvel at how we were able to keep going. Somehow you draw on resources you didn't know you had. I went to the homes of all my students and was able to be of assistance in several cases.

We were often offered fabulous sums to escort someone to the Chinese city or to do some errand there. We always refused, as we didn't feel that it was right to cash in on misfortune. If the person had any claim on us, we helped him freely. (He could pay for the taxi.) If there was not a recognizable claim, we had to refuse, as we were more than overloaded with legitimate requests. The only exception was when a merchant wanted one of us to sit on the truck which would bring the stock from his shop into the concession. We agreed to bring three loads from his shop if he would make one trip to our old house to bring our more important things.

All this time I was getting no letters from Wally in Nanking. One night I had gone home and gone into a profound sleep when my nephew came and said, "You have a letter." I said, "Ask your mother to read it and see if it's important." He said, "But this letter is from Wally." Then I woke up in a hurry.

In the late evenings we would go to a place where there was a short wave radio that could sometimes get the news from Nanking---in spite of the Japanese efforts to jam it. This was important to us.

It went on like this until late August. One of the things I was doing in my busy, busy days was to keep track of any possible way to get away from there. The only way would be by ship. There were underground ways being set-up to smuggle students out, but they weren't for me. The ships were booked for many weeks in advance.

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There was a girl who needed to get away to marry her fiance in Nanking, taking his younger brothers and sisters with her. We had planned that we would go together, if there should be a chance to go.

One day I went to the steamship company to inquire and was told, "Yes. There is a ship being rushed to Tsingtao to evacuate foreigners because they expect trouble there in the next day or two. You can take it as far as Chefoo if you like, but you will have to find your way overland from there. A launch from the wharf here will take you to the ship at Tangku. Be here by five o'clock."

I sent word to my friend and rushed to pack two suitcases and a rucksack--just what I could carry by myself--and to supply myself with money. At five o'clock I found that I was to have a private launch for the trip down the river, because this was a British steamship company, which could not mix Chinese and foreign passengers. I protested that the other launch, on which my Chinese friends were, was bursting at the seams, and that they could just as well come with me. No one would listen to such heresy.

The Chinese launch pulled away ahead of mine and the company agent mopped his face and said, "That's a relief! We have some number one Chinese on board and the J's are after them."

Leaving at five o'clock we didn't get to the ship at Tangku, until about nine. I got there ahead of the other launch. When the passengers came on board, several of them sank into chairs and sighed, "Thank God!" From the moment they were on a British ship, they were safe. One of them was the editor of Yi Shih Pao, one of the highly respected Chinese newspapers, which had been steadfastly anti-Japanese.

This is a good time to tell something about Yi Shih Pao. After the war began, it continued to be printed in the concessions, but it was forbidden to take it into the Chinese city. Thus, I was much interested one day in the Chinese city to hear a newsboy shouting, "Yi Shih Pao." I sent somebody to buy a copy and took it back with me. I couldn't read it, but someone who could compared it with that day's issue of the genuine Yi Shi Pao. It was the same kind of paper and the same type and format, but the things it said were totally different, and totally pro-Japanese.

I: Were the same people printing it?

LIU: No, no. It was a Japanese counterfeit. Because the Chinese people respected Yi Shih Pao, this was one way that they could publish their propaganda and have it taken seriously. I've always thought that that was an interesting little sidelight.

Anyway, the next day we got to Chefoo and went somewhere for the night. We were told that if we hoped to get bus tickets we should get to the depot by three o'clock. So we did and the line was so long that by seven o'clock when the window closed, we were not quite up to the head of the line. They said they were sending seven buses and that would be all.

We were feeling quite let down when they opened the window and said they had decided to send an eighth bus. So there we were in a long caravan of buses heading toward Tsinan. We were on a gravel road, not terribly good, and it began to rain. The order went out for traffic to be stopped on that road because the road was of strategic importance and must not be rutted to spoil it for military convoys. So the buses pulled off to the side of the road and sat there until the next day. As we sat there, a huge military convoy of trucks, twice as heavy as the buses, came through, thoroughly ruining the road. We still sat there. Some people went through the rain to a nearby village to spend the night, but some of them came back saying that it was worse there--too dirty and verminous. All we had to eat was what people brought out from the village to sell to us: hard boiled eggs, and mooncakes and cups of tea. They were already preparing mooncakes for the Mid-autumn Festival, and that was all they had to sell. Mooncakes are very rich and cannot be eaten in quantity.

The next day we went on to Tsinan and slept on our bags in the railroad station, waiting for the train to Nanking. When we got on the train, we found on board the few hardy souls from the boat who had taken a chance on going all the way to Tsingtao on the chance of being able to make it from there. So apparently we could as well have gone that way, but there had been no way to know it.

The train at that time, went only as far as Pukow, across the river from Nanking, and one had to cross the Yangtze on a ferry. We got in after the last ferry, so we had to spend the night in Pukow. The streets were all full of people sleeping on the sidewalks, because Nanking was getting bombed most nights. People felt a little safer in Pukow, even though the station there was also a bombing target.

We spent the night there, playing cards in the lobby of a hotel, and had our first experience of an air-raid alarm. When the alarm sounded, suddenly six soldiers materialized to protect me because I was a foreigner. I had my doubts whether they were really protecting me or guarding against my being a spy.

Early in the morning we got on the first ferry and got across to Nanking. I got a taxi to go to the National Epidemic Prevention Bureau, where Wally had been staying with his brother. The guard at the gate said, "This place was bombed and nobody lives here anymore."

What should I do? I dug through my things and found the address of another brother who lived in Ling Yuan, a suburb outside the city near the Sun Yat-sen memorial, and I had the taxi take me there. It was an inconspicuous little bungalow, tucked in between the big houses of Wang Ching-wei and President Lin Sen, and we had some trouble finding it. We got there about seven in the morning and found people sleeping all over the floor to be away from the city for the night. Somebody went to call Wally and he came out rubbing his eyes and saying, "What are you doing here? I thought it would take at least a week for your journey."

We stayed there until sometime in November, about 20 days before the Japanese took the city, which was in December of 1937.

One night I was called to the phone. "This is Hall Paxton at the U. S. Embassy. We have a boat ticket up to Hankow for you, tomorrow." "You have a <u>what</u>?" "A boat ticket for Hankow. The Japanese have served notice to the diplomatic community to get all foreign nationals out of the way, as they intend to destroy the city the last three days of this week, and they can't be responsible for what happens to anyone."

"Well, you can tell the Japanese for me that I have a perfect right to be here and that they are fully responsible for anything that happens to me."

"I think I'd like to meet you! I can't force you to go, but I will tell you to feel free to run to the embassy if you should be in town when things begin to happen. Come to lunch if you are in town."

So on one of the supposedly bad days I did go to lunch at the embassy, and there I met an American couple named McDaniel who were journalists. They had moved into the embassy for safety and had brought with them a lovely litter of Scotty puppies. They were having a problem finding suitable homes for the pups, because they didn't trust their friends not to run off and abandon them in a crunch. Somehow they got the impression that I would be a responsible owner, so they gave me two puppies, the pick of the litter and the runt, who became our beloved Jeannie and Jackie, complicating and enriching our lives.

I am glad to say that all of the diplomatic community except the Americans reacted the way I did to the Japanese warning, which imposed considerable restraint on the Japanese plans. The American ambassador, Nelson Johnson, got on his gunboat and steamed up to Wuhu. You can imagine how hard it was for an American to hold his head up for a while after that. For a long time I blamed Johnson for this disgrace, but more recently I have run across letters I wrote, at the time, which put a different light on it. Hall Paxton told me that he and Johnson had resolved years before never to evacuate again, after having done it once somewhere, but that Roosevelt had given strict orders to take any means to get Americans out of China and not to get involved in any trouble.

Roosevelt was determined to maintain a stance of neutrality and non-involvement, and he was afraid that if any Americans were involved in trouble it might drag the country into war. My attitude was that I had a right to make my life in China if I wanted to, and I did not expect to involve my country in anything that might happen to me. Roosevelt inveighed against the "stubborn missionaries" who refused to leave the schools or hospitals which they had built. I felt that I had a stake in my marriage which I was not willing to give up.

One night when we were already in bed, my brother-in-law, Frank Liu, who was a government big shot, came home and called Wally to the other room. They talked for a long time, and then Wally came back and said, "There is a report that the Japanese have decided to march on Nanking. All women and children who haven't already gone, are to be sent away." The fall of Shanghai had taken several weeks. Frank had already sent his wife and children away. Since I didn't have children, I didn't see any reason why I should leave before they did.

The next morning Frank came home in the middle of the morning and gave some instructions to a cousin who was keeping house for us and was busily packing things up to evacuate. He called me to the dining table, where he sat peeling pears and offering them to me as he said, "I want you to understand about this evacuation. When the time comes for us to go, all transportation will be commandeered for government personnel, and there will be no way for you. You have to go first." "All right," I said, "I'll be reasonable. We'll discuss it again in a few weeks." But two days later he and his office left and the following day Wally's office tried to leave and I with them.

I: They did let you go with them?

LIU: They were nice about it. The office had bought tickets for a certain boat. We went to the waterfront in a pouring rain and waited and waited for this boat to come, and when it did come it went right by. It turned out that it was not supposed to stop at Nanking on that trip. Somebody had pulled a fast one on us, but the men caught him before he got away with the ticket money and got it back. Then we were there at the waterfront, with the rain still pouring down, trying to find any other way to go.

I: You were going up the Yangtze?

LIU: Yes. So we tried a lot of things that didn't work. Finally, Wally and I went to a hotel near by to get some sleep. We were just nicely asleep when the others came pounding at the door and said, "There's a boat." So we went out and found a big British ship. We didn't have tickets, but we got into sampans (which charged 40 dollars) and got out to the ship and swarmed aboard. The captain was very unhappy, because he was already overloaded. He did give permission for the men to go down and sleep among the cargo, but not me. To the British it was unthinkable that a white woman should travel any way but first class, no matter what the circumstances.

I said, "But I have to go. The alternative is to start out to walk to Hankow." I had been 48 hours at the waterfront and this was the best chance that had come along. I said I didn't have to have a first class cabin. I could sleep in the lounge or dining room or any place. No, there were already men in all those places and all the first class berths had been given to women long ago. I said I could go down among the cargo with my husband. He was horrified. Didn't I understand what was suitable for a white woman?

Finally, I made him so unhappy that he called the cabin steward to show me that there was no place for me. The steward checked over the chart and found that there was still one man in a first class cabin, and the other berth in that cabin had been given to an unattached woman. So I was in. Although we didn't like to spend forty dollars for a first-class ticket, it was nice for the fellows to have a place where they could come to shave and clean up.

I: What happened to the man that you displaced?

LIU: He could go to the public rooms like the rest of the white men. My cabin mate was a White Russian woman who was strongly suspected of being a Japanese spy. Someone in our group knew this and I felt that her conversation on the way, bore out the suspicion. She would say things like how stupid the Chinese were to resist the Japanese.

We got to Hankow and the whole lot of us barged in on Wally's family. He and I were given a room, but the rest of the crowd slept all over the floor, as was customary by this time. His mother was so flustered at having the "new bride" come home amid such confusion that she forgot to set-off the firecrackers that had been prepared to welcome me. Although I had been married for several months by that time, I had to be treated like a bride on arriving at the old home.

I: You had met her, though?

LIU: No. So I was the Hsin Niang-tze, and she put on a splendid meal for us. I wanted to show off my good Chinese manners as a guest, so I said, "Tsai t'ai to la" (There is too much food). Everyone howled because they said I was the hostess and shouldn't have said that. I should have said,

"Mei yu ts'ai" (There is no food). But I didn't feel at all like a hostess.

The next day my father-in-law started to give me Chinese lessons, but I very quickly figured out that I didn't want to learn his broad Hupeh dialect. I'm afraid he was hurt that I spent all my mornings up on the rooftop studying Chinese all by myself instead of letting him teach me.

Wally had quite a wealthy friend whose wife and children had left. The house was standing empty, so several of us decided to live there with the owner. We prepared it for siege, putting in big supplies of coal, salt, flour, rice, and other staples. Just as we had spent all our money that way the order came to proceed to Chungking.

I: Could we go back just a minute? Do you want to say anything about how you were accepted by this Chinese family?

LIU: They were pretty good about it. There were four sons. The eldest, who was adopted, was the only one that had married and had children, so there were actually no grandchildren of their own blood. The other three boys showed no signs of being willing to marry, and she was modern enough to know that it was useless to force the issue. So when Wally broke the news that he was going to marry me, I guess they were ready to make do with what they could get. At any rate, they were very nice about it. My mother-in-law had been a nurse in a mission hospital before she was married and still knew a little English. My father-in-law had been the principal of a middle school.

I: A mission school?

LIU: No, a private school of some kind. They were rice-bowl Christians. Three of the sons had studied in America, so I guess they were somewhat less shocked by me than some other families might have been. My mother-in-law tried to teach me to cook some of Wally's favorite dishes and we got along quite well.

I needed bedsheets, and they had to be made with a center seam. I was doing them with beautiful little stitches in order to impress her, but she didn't see me working on them until they were nearly done. Then instead of inspecting my little stitches she just said, "Why didn't you tell me you had sheets to make? I'd have sent them to the tailor on the corner and had them done in a minute on his machine."

I shocked her in one way. She was trying to fill in the gaps in our basic equipment, which of course was pretty sketchy since I had left Tientsin with only what I could carry. She asked whether we needed wash basins. I said, "No. Thank you, we have one." This was terrible for me to think that one wash basin for the two of us was enough. I didn't know that every self-respecting Chinese was supposed to have three wash basins: one for the face, one for the body, and one for the feet. I can see that this made sense when the basins were of wood or other material that could not easily be kept really clean, but with a smooth enamel basin I am comfortable with a less rigorous standard of hygiene.

As I was saying a while ago, we had just got organized to stand a seige in Hankow when the order came to go to Chungking. We left on a Chinese ship where there was no problem about a white woman going third class. We noticed, however, that the crew assumed I must be White Russian, as they had never known any other kind of white woman to travel the way we were doing. We were deck class, I guess. We had the

puppies in a basket, and the ship was so crowded that the only place we could let them out to do their business, was under President Lin-Sen's official limousine, which was chained to the deck. (This was an elegant car, several years old, with only 600 miles on it, having been used only for important official occasions.)

Big ships can go only as far as Ichang. Beyond that, because of the gorges, only special, shallow-draft, powerful boats can go. So people were coming into Ichang on big boats and waiting their chance to get on a little boat for the rest of the way. We were there for 18 days and we had to go up the Yangtze gorges in winter, when it was so foggy we didn't really get a good view. We traveled by day and the boat tied up overnight. We often could get ashore for a walk or even to buy food. We had planned to have a festive dinner and party at the place where we would tie up on Christmas Eve, but that day we got stuck on a sandbar in the river. We were there several hours. A British ship went by and ignored us. Finally, another Chinese ship coming down the river, gave us a tow line and pulled us loose and we eventually got to Chungking on Christmas Day.

Wally's office staff went to some sort of dormitory space, but they wanted to give us more privacy, so they put us into an empty building that was being prepared for the War Area Service Corps. This was in a place aptly named White Elephant Street. We had a room on the third floor, which contained two bamboo cots when we came. We got a servant from the office to go out right away and buy us a washtub, tea kettle, charcoal stove, and a few other necessities, because the puppies had been shut in their basket too long and had to have a bath. Somehow we managed to camp out there for quite a few days until we could find a place of our own.

What we found was the whole fourth floor of a four-story apartment building. This space had previously been the landlord's ancestral hall, with big red and gold beams, a fancy carved shrine at one end, etc. It was a gorgeous place, but he had moved his ancestors to safer ground in the country. There were windows on all four sides, looking over Chungking and the river, and fortunately catching every breeze in the dreadfully hot summer. We even had a little flat roof over one section of the building, which made a place for the dogs to run out without going downstairs. The landlord built partitions to our specifications to turn the place into a livable apartment. We lived there until we moved into the Methodist Mission, after the bombing began.

By the time we moved in, I was conscious of being pregnant. The baby came at the end of September and lived only a week because of a defective heart. My doctor was Ruth Hemenway of the Methodist Mission. Her book, A Memoir of Revolutionary China, has just been published by the University of Massachusetts Press (1977). Unfortunately, Ruth did not live to see it in print.

When Ruth told me the baby was dead I said, "Now I want to be busy." She said, "Edith Epstein says they want more English teachers at the Soviet Embassy." So as soon as I was strong enough, I went to work there. It was interesting to see how the Russians ticked.

I: Was Edith Epstein a missionary?

LIU: No. Her husband was the writer Israel Epstein. He was in Hong Kong and she was teaching in the embassy in Chungking. They were separated and later divorced. Edith had been teaching at the embassy when they were in Hankow the year before and had come up to Chungking with them.

I: Was she an American?

LIU: Yes, but she was born in Outer Mongolia, I think, and had gone to school in Tientsin for some time.

I: Dr. Ruth Hemenway was a Methodist missionary?

LIU: Yes. Dr. Horace Campbell, now of Denver, was there at that time, too. When the baby was dead, Ruth thought it would be gloomy for me in the hospital. She was still of the school that thought women must be kept in bed for two weeks after a first baby, so she had me taken on a stretcher, to her own bed on a balcony overlooking the confluence of the Yangtze and Kialing rivers. She setup a cot for herself near me and kept me there until I was ready to go home. It was a very beautiful place and she did much to heal my spirit.

So I taught at the Soviet Embassy for nearly a year, from late 1938 until maybe September, 1939, when we moved to Kweiyang.

It was interesting that within the time I was at the Embassy all the older men who had been through the revolution disappeared from the foreign service, and their places were taken by young men who had grown up in the system.

The older men were interesting because they had thought things out and could discuss things with you even when they didn't agree with you. But the young men could neither see nor hear anything that didn't fit the little picture that had been imprinted on their minds. Their minds were totally closed.

One of my favorite anecdotes about an older man was at the time when Russia invaded Finland. I knew that in the Communist book, imperialist war was one of the cardinal sins, so I said to the second secretary, "What's the difference between this invasion of Finland and imperialist war?"

"Oh, you don't understand," he said. "Imperialist wars are fought by capitalist nations." How very comfortable it must have been to feel that by definition they could not be guilty of imperialism. What they did was liberation.

Ambassador Luganetz-Orelsky had fought in the revolution in command of an armored train. He was a delightful character. He had lessons with both Edith and me each day. He was fascinated with proverbs and any sort of folklore. I would come into the room and he would be sitting there with his dictionary. He would pull out a Russian proverb and ask what we had to correspond to it. One day he said, "You cannot catch two watermelons with one hand." I replied, "You cannot kill two birds with one stone." He was delighted. He wanted to learn all such things--nursery rhymes, and often-quoted poems, and even the Bible. Although he was not interested in the Bible from a religious standpoint, he realized that it was at the back of much of our language and literature.

I: Was he interested in learning about the American mind so he could transact business?

LIU: Certainly a thorough knowledge of the language and culture would make him more effective as a diplomat, but I think he really loved the quirks of language and folklore. He had a peasant's devotion to proverbs and adages. I remember his delight when we passed the time in the air-raid

shelter one day teaching him the verse: Plan for more than you can do/ Then do it. Bite off more than you can chew/ Then chew it. Hitch your wagon to a star/ Keep your seat and there you are.

When he found that I had kept bees, he said that was an occupation for women or old men. When he retired he wanted to live in a village and keep bees and tell lies to the children about how the revolution could never have succeeded without him. He never realized the dreams. We believe he was liquidated. This must have been in 1939, which was the time when Stalin was purging people left and right.

One day I went for the ambassador's lesson and the guard in the hall told me he wasn't ready. I sat in the lower hall waiting to be called. A plane had come from Moscow the day before, and when that happened they were often too busy to have their lessons.

I: Could everyone take lessons?

LIU: No, there weren't enough teachers, but a good many did. They had to pay for their own lessons. As I sat waiting, Luganetz came down with half a dozen people I didn't know, walked across the hall without a glance to me, went out, got in to a car, and went down to the plane that was waiting on the sandbar. His wife was with him. They flew back to Moscow, but we teachers weren't told he was gone for several days. Weeks later we heard that he had been given a vacation at the Black Sea because of his back trouble. On the way back, the car went over a cliff in the Caucasus and he and his wife were killed. Nobody believed this. We were sure he had been liquidated somehow or other.

I: Weren't most the Russian advisors in China liquidated? I mean Borodin?

LIU: That was a different situation entirely. Borodin was connected with the early days of the Kuomintang revolution. He was kicked out of China, but I don't know what happened to him when he got home. Anyhow, there went our nice ambassador. He was replaced by a young fellow named Alexander Paniushkin, who was later appointed to Washington. And little by little all the older men disappeared.

I: That is interesting information.

LIU: I thought it significant. Some of the younger men were very nice, but so limited in their outlook. I might give a couple of examples. There was a very nice Ukranian boy--just a sweet person. One day in his lesson there was a sentence, "The servant stole a great deal of money." He said, "That is a bad sentence." "What's bad about it?" I asked. He said, "It's propaganda. You must not say such things." "Well, what would you say?" I asked. "I would say the banker stole a great deal of money."

Another time we had the story of Robin Hood, which told how he stole from "rich merchants, proud nobles, and greedy priests." He said, "These adjectives are unnecessary." "Why?" "Because all merchants are rich, all nobles are proud and all priests are greedy." "I know some exceptions." "No. That's the way it is."

One time I had to admit he had a good point. His lesson had the sentence, "Most of the boys in this class are very stupid." He said, "You must not say such things." Although I mentally agreed with him, I said, "How do you know you aren't stupid?" He said, "IF they are stupid in this class, you must put them somewhere where they will not be stupid."

I: That's interesting. Was it only the young ones who made such comments?

LIU: The older ones were in more advanced work. They weren't getting silly exercises like that.

I: You mentioned that they were interested in proverbs.

LIU: It was just Ambassador Luganetz who had that passion. He wanted to learn all such things. One day I gave him the saying about throwing the baby out with the bath water. He liked that. Of course, we were not supposed to discuss anything political, but sometimes with these older men we did.

I: Who told you not to?

LIU: I think it was just understood. But I said to him, "As you look back at the revolution, can you see any instance of throwing the baby out with the bath water?" He said, "Yes. I remember the people who wanted to kill all the White Army officers before they had time to train any army officers for us. I objected to that. I said they were the only ones who knew military science, and they must be kept to teach our new officers."

I: That's interesting. He was a lot more open.

LIU: He was a real human being.

Then the bombing of Chungking began. The first bombing was on a Sunday in January, 1939. I had taken my two scotty dogs to play in the garden at the Methodist mission, and there was another American woman there with a scotty, so we were all excited to see the three scotties together. I was invited to stay to lunch. There was an air-raid siren, which we hadn't had before in Chungking. Just as lunch was served, there was an urgent alarm. Ruth Hemenway and I were the only persons there with experience of air-raids. I stepped to the door and listened. I could hear bombers. The bombers in those days didn't have their engines synchronized, so they made a heavy, throbbing sound, very different from fighter planes.

A missionary lady said, "Do you think you can tell bombers by the sound? Come sit down. This soup will never be so good again." Ruth also said she heard bombers, but the response was, "Oh, you are being ridiculous. You people from down the river are so nervous. Now, come on and sit down." So we sat down and had eaten about one bite of soup when the bombs fell. The mission is right on the edge of the city wall, looking over the river, which at that season was nearly dry. The bombs fell right along the sand bar in the river bed. So Ruth and I said, "They've gone by now; we might as well go on with our soup." But two or three minutes later there came another flight that did exactly the same thing. I said, "If they're coming in waves, we'd better go to the shelter." Ruth and the other woman with the scotty and I went to the shelter, and just as we got there, the third wave came in the same path as the first two.

The other missionary lady wouldn't take shelter because she felt that to do so would be to show lack of faith in God. She said that if necessary, her guardian angel would turn the bombs away from her. Since she didn't go to the shelter, the

men thought they had to stay with her, so they all stood outside watching the bombs fall. We counted over 60 bomb craters in the sand bar just below the house. Most of them decided never to do that again. As for the guardian angel, I couldn't help asking the lady who would be hit by the bombs that were turned aside from her. She thought that a frivolous question.

One might ask what the Japanese meant by dropping so many bombs on that sand bar. The theory that evolved was that they had been meant for the main street of the city, a little the other side of us, and that the strong wind had deflected them as they fell. If that is so, then they had blown across above us and landed on the other side. It's hard to believe that three waves of bombers could have done so little damage. A mile or so down from us, the point of land where the two rivers came together, jutted out into the line of flight, and there was some damage and a few casualties there.

That destroyed the myth that bombers could never reach Chungking, so high in the mountains, but it was only a rare break in the weather that made it possible at that season. The bombing didn't start in earnest until May 3.

There's one more thing I should mention about the Soviet Embassy. It was a beautiful old foreign style house on a beautiful hill with a Chinese garden. It had been a warlord's mansion, which is the only way one could account for such a house being there at all. Behind the house there was a very steep hill. Of course, Chungking is very steep. Some people compare it to San Francisco. That is why they were able to make such wonderful air-raid shelters there. They could blast tunnels into any hillside where the rock strata were reasonably firm and flat.

The embassy shelter was dug into the steep hill just behind the building. The hill went up almost vertically above it, so that the only way a bomb could touch it at all would be by falling into the narrow space between the house and the shelter. There were two entrances to the shelter, and the tunnel twisted around inside so that even if there had been a bomb in that little spot, the concussion couldn't have gone through to where the people were. On the way in there were showers and decontamination chambers, in case of gas attack. They had their own generator and ventilation system in case of power failure. Then there were long galleries with comfortable wicker chairs, enough to hold the entire staff, and refrigerators, which were kept stocked with sandwich makings. Really, it was a great place to be during raids. I doubt if there was anything in town to compare with it, though I didn't have a chance to inspect the facilities of the higher echelons of government.

The May 3rd alarm was a long one, starting around noon. It went on and on without a clear signal. Someone went out to check and said that there had been a bad bombing and that the alarm was continuing because of fires in the city. That still doesn't make sense to me. Probably we just didn't get the clear siren because the power was knocked out. Anyhow, they let us out of the shelter, but didn't let us try to go home because we wouldn't be able to get through the mess. Somebody went out in a car to scout and reported that there were fires pretty close to where I lived. I was getting anxious.

We three English teachers gathered in the club room to pass the time until we could go home. Some of the older men, realizing our situation, came and spent a couple of hours with us, putting on an impromptu stunt show or anything to keep our minds off our troubles until we could try to go home.

About five they let us go. Edith went through the city, and saw long rows of stretchers being carried to the hospital, and lots of damage. I went down along the river road and didn't see a thing until I came to the Generalissimo's headquarters, which had evidently been a prime target. The headquarters itself hadn't been touched, but the surrounding area was just matchsticks. That's where I saw my only casualty, because by this time the clean-up was fairly well advanced. I saw one man completely charred. He evidently had been carrying two baskets on a shoulder pole and had run out of the fire with his body and his baskets blazing. I saw this and it was just like looking at a picture. It didn't have any emotional impact on me until some men came with a ladder to use like a stretcher to carry the body away. As they lifted him, I thought he moved. Then I was really sick to think that he could be like that and be alive! But he wasn't.

I couldn't get past that area by the Gimo's headquarters because the streets were completely blocked by rubble and fires. I kept going this way and that, trying to find a way through, but then I'd meet refugees running the other way from the fires and have to turn back and try something else. I finally got back to where I had first been blocked, and the clean-up had proceeded to the point where it was possible to pick a way through, so I got home.

Our fourth floor apartment was about at the level of the street, so we had to go down stairs in the alley to the front door and then up the four floors to the apartment, about 160 steps in all. As I got close things looked pretty good. I felt quite hopeful as I went down the alley. We were right on the city wall, which of course had had squatters huts built against it down below, and flimsy bamboo shacks along the edge by our house. As I came around the

curve at the foot of the lane I saw that these huts were totally demolished. I ran down the last few steps and there was our building safe and sound. There were still fires in the bamboo shacks down over the wall, and the shacks at the edge of the wall had been torn down to keep the fires from spreading up into the city.

I climbed the four flights and there was Wally lying exhausted in the long chair. He had come out from the shelter at his office, which was not very far away, had seen the fires near our house and had run home and packed what he thought were the essentials to carry out in case the fire spread. He carried our precious things and those of two or three neighbor women, down to the street, leaving someone to watch the pile, and then after the danger of fire was over he had carried them all in again. There were things hanging from the light cords or anywhere, as he had thrown them around trying to find the most important things to save. I think I've never had my possession properly organized since that day. It was the beginning of the end so far as my being able to keep anything in order.

As evening came on there was a terrible noise: clang, bang! We asked our wonderful amah, Chiang Sao, to go out on the balcony and see what was going on. She came back and said, "A dog is eating the moon." Sure enough, it was an eclipse, just what we needed to put the cap of terror on a terrible day.

I: What particular significance does the eclipse have?

LIU: Well, of course, if the dog ate the moon there wouldn't be any moon anymore, and that cannot be tolerated. So they bang on pans and kettles and things to drive the dog away. It always works.

I: I see. He never gets the whole thing or he coughs it up again. Did people leave the city?

LIU: Oh, they were just pouring out the next day. You couldn't get a ricksha or car or anything for love or money. I had to walk to work (about three miles), and the streets were clogged with refugees. The authorities had been trying, for a long time, to get non-essential people out, as they knew something like this would happen eventually, but nobody would go. There had also been orders to tear down houses to make fire breaks to keep fires from spreading so. But when you try to tear somebody's house down, he gets pretty hyper about it. So no progress had been made on that plan, and now the bombers had made firebreaks for us--much more extensive than they would have needed to be. Then the fire wardens proceeded with making firebreaks where still needed, and people didn't object anymore, or at least they didn't interfere. The city was opened up a great deal and was much less dangerous than it had been. It got so you couldn't tell along the street which places had been bombed and which torn down on purpose. The effect was the same.

But the power plant had been knocked out, so there were no sirens. All day long there were rumors of alarms, but nothing happened. We were to go to dinner at my brother-in-law's (Frank Liu) on the other side of town that evening. I suppose we set out about five o'clock, allowing time to walk, since rickshas were hopeless. I thought he wasn't ready and he thought I wasn't ready, so we must have delayed

about five minutes waiting for each other. We must have gone about halfway when suddenly air-raid wardens swarmed out and cleared the streets. We were put into a Chinese theater building. We picked the place under the ticket counter as the best place to be and crouched there. There were lots of bombs. The area we had just walked though and the area ahead of us had been demolished. We were right between the two bad places. If we had left five minutes earlier or later we could have been in trouble. So waiting for each other had been all right.

I: Would these attacks be every day or two or three times a week?

LIU: It depended a good deal on the weather and on whether they could get past the Chinese defenses. These two attacks that I've described were May 3rd and 4th, and the next big ones were the 12th and 25th. By one of those dates (I forget which) people had learned that it was not good to stay among buildings that might fall down on them, so they would run out and crowd into the park. Then one day, the park was bombed and it took three days to get all the arms and legs down from the trees. It was after that that the social worker at the hospital brought me a little girl they had found under a stone bench, with no parents to be found. She thought I might want to adopt her because I had lost a baby. I didn't accept the idea, but I mentioned the child to one of the Chinese teachers at the embassy and he adopted her.

I: So the embassy had Chinese teachers as well as English?

LIU: Yes. There were lots of bombings from then on and the amazing thing was how people would go right back and build up right away. They were always building and repairing and making do and getting along somehow. Of course, the ones who had no good reason to stay, left.

I: Where would they go? To relatives in another area?

LIU: If they had any. Otherwise, anyplace they could. If they were Szechuan natives, they would probably have relatives to go to. I don't know where they went, but they did get out of Chungking. It got so that the population was small enough to be accommodated in the air-raid shelters, so there was really no reason for anyone to be killed anymore, if he followed the proper discipline. I was a little antsy because it was a 50 minute walk from the embassy to where I lived, and I could have been caught in between. There were public dugouts, but I never had to go into one. I heard they were pretty bad--crowded and airless. The first 15 or even 20 minutes of my walk, I could have turned and run back to where I started from. The last 20 I could hurry to my destination, but that left a gap of ten minutes when I wouldn't know where to go, and I covered that ground fast.

I: What about food supplies and so on?

LIU: Pretty good in general. There were times when raids were coming so often that farmers didn't want to come into town and food got a little scarce for that reason, but you could always get the essentials.

I: I suppose people with jobs in Chungking stayed?

LIU: Generally speaking.

I: Would they send their families out?

LIU: Very often. When I went up to the hills to put a couple of suitcases out of reach of bombs, the Methodist ladies offered to let Wally and me move into their big house at the mission as caretakers, in exchange for being able to use the hospital shelter. This was a strong inducement, as our apartment building had no good shelter. One of the ladies was a huge woman, who probably hadn't walked a quarter of a mile in ten years and it took four men to carry her sedan chair. When the bombs began to fall, she was in such a hurry to get across the river and up the hill that a strong man couldn't keep up with her. She listened as the arrangements were made for me to move into the mission house, but then she let me have a piece of her mind. I had no business staying in the city. "The only duty of a woman at a time like this is to get out of the way and not be a burden on the men."

I: You continued to stay in Chungking until..?

LIU: Until fall. Right after the bombings began, when everyone was wanting to get out, a man came from Great China (Ta Hsia) University in Kweiyang and wanted Wally to come immediately to take the place of a professor who had died. He wanted very much to do this. He didn't like his job and wanted to get back to teaching. This seemed

like a fine opportunity. But his boss, Colonel Huang, forbade him to go. He said if he left then it would look as if he were running away. There was a rule against anyone in a government or military organization leaving his job without permission. They had always said that the New Life Movement was neither government nor military, but that didn't hold now. So Wally lost the chance, but the next fall, when the offer was renewed, we just went.

There was a long time there in Chungking when life pretty well revolved around air-raids. You wouldn't have your hair cut on a clear day, for example, and there were certain things you wouldn't try to do on a moonlit night because you would probably be interrupted.

I mentioned that we moved into the Methodist Mission Ladies' House to be able to use the excellent shelter that had been made for the hospital.

I: Did you go into a shelter each time a raid came or just for bad ones?

LIU: We were pretty good about going in. If you used a big shelter like that, it wasn't right to be rushing in and out at the last minute. There would be jams at the door. You had to be disciplined about going in and staying put. If you had a foxhole for yourself in your yard, you could stay out until you heard the bombers overhead, but when you had to share one with hundreds of people, that wasn't right.

I: What did you do inside these shelters? Did you read?

LIU: No light. Maybe a candle here and there, where some hospital patient needed care. If there was someone you wanted to talk with, you did. Otherwise you just sat. I used to carry a covered basket, maybe a foot high, and I would put that on my lap, and my arms on that, and put my head down. But those nights would get awfully long, and when you had to get up and go to work the next morning, it got pretty rugged. But of course, my pupils at the embassy were having the same problem, and the morning after a long night raid, most of them wouldn't take their lessons. Finally we had an understanding, that if the raid went on past midnight we wouldn't have lessons before 10:00. If it was still on at 2:00, we wouldn't have lessons until noon. If it were later than that, we would have the whole day off.

I: So they did come at night then? In the beginning wasn't it just in the daytime?

LIU: The first raids were by day, but then the Chinese defenses got better and the Japanese got more accustomed to the route, so they would come on moonlit nights. Of course, when the alarm came at night, we weren't allowed to turn on any lights, so we learned to be dressed and out of the house with our bag of precious things, within five minutes, by moonlight. An interesting question was what people carried in the air-raid bags. Everyone had a small bag of things that he could not risk losing. Ours had, among other things, the deeds to the family land back in Wuhan, which my father-in-law had given us for safekeeping, my passport, and a change of underwear. People who had babies always carried the bottle of Haliverol or other vitamins which they used.

Once I was just having my hair washed when there was an alarm. The barber started to run without even rinsing me. I yelled, "You've got time enough to rinse my hair!" So he did and it turned out to be a false alarm anyway.

The loss that probably affected me most was when a shoe store was bombed. My feet are much too big for any shoes you can get in China. I wear a size 9-D and a size 11 stocking. The biggest stockings I could get were size 9. Before the war you could take any old shoes that you liked to a shoe store and they would make a last and copy them for you. Then you could keep the last and have shoes made by it any time. But I didn't have a last, and by the time I wanted to have one made, the shops didn't want to do such things anymore. I was wearing the biggest men's tennis shoes I could find and still getting bunions because they weren't big enough.

Finally I found a shop that would make a last for me. They made one pair of shoes that I liked very much, but I wanted them to make a little change in the last and make another pair. Before that pair was done the shop was bombed and they went out of business. Before the war ended, I was wearing Chinese homemade cloth shoes. A pair would last maybe a month, so I had a woman spending much of her time just making shoes for me. Even these were a problem because they have always made the right and left shoe just alike. I have a very long big toe and was not willing to try to squeeze it into a round-toed shoe, so we had to design a revolutionary pattern with room for my toe.

It was a big change when we moved to Kweiyang in the fall. Wally was head of the department of economics at Great China University (a refugee university from Shanghai), and I taught English and one class of French. Wally had wanted me to stay in Chungking because I was so well paid at the embassy, but I refused. I didn't even want to teach full

time, as I was feeling worn out. So I found myself teaching just one hour short of full time, which meant hourly rates and no fringe benefits--definitely a bad deal. But I was stuck with it.

Kweiyang had been badly bombed once, on February 4, of the year we moved there (1939). The whole center of the city had been burned out by a raid of nine planes with incendiary bombs. It was a walled city, and thousands had been trampled to death trying to get through the city gates to escape the fires. By the time we got there in September the main street had been rebuilt pretty well so you wouldn't realize what had happened unless you peered behind the new buildings and saw the acres of desolation. The city gates had been torn down and other openings made in the walls so people could get out easily. The terrain was such that air-raid shelters could not well be built in the city, but the area of a city was small enough that one could walk out to the country from any point within ten minutes. It had been a pretty concentrated city of about 300,000 before the war, and the population at least doubled as it became a mecca for refugees.

We shared a house with the head of the Central Hospital and the head of the Central Nursing School, making our own breakfast and lunch and sharing dinner with them. Jeannie, our scotty dog, had puppies just after we arrived, which made life interesting. We would have liked to get a house in the country, but this was hard to do.

Somebody told Wally that Tai Li (the head of the secret police) wanted to send me some pupils and said I should act surprised when it happened. Of course I pictured this in terms of men, so I didn't make the connection at first when I was asked to tutor four girls who were said to be from Madame Chiang's School for the Orphans of Revolutionary Martyrs, who were preparing to go to America to study.

It didn't take us long to catch on that there was something funny about the deal. For one thing, they told us different stories at different times. They were under the guardianship of the local police chief and had to write detailed diaries every day reporting everyone they had seen. When they asked us the names of people who had come to the house, so they could write them down, we told them it was not their business. There was lots of money spent on them. For Christmas each one got an Omega watch, an expensive woolen scarf, and many other hard-to-get items. They weren't actually very bright and made poor progress in English, but they kept on until the U. S. government cancelled an arrangement for accepting Chinese students when they found out that the students would be subject to thought control while in America. When the names came out, my girls quit the lessons.

I hadn't been keen on taking them in the first place, as I had enough to do. The inducement was that the police chief promised to find us a house outside the city. This he never succeeded in doing, but we moved in with the girls in a large second floor of a semi-foreign style house where we were comfortable even after they left. They put in electricity for us and provided servants.

Things went on smoothly in Kwieyang until the beginning of winter vacation. The university president came banging at our gate late one night and said that there was an arrest warrant out for Wally and we'd better figure out what we were going to do about it. It turned out that Wally's former bos, Colonel Huang had made good his threat to make trouble if we left. The warrant had been there almost as long as we had, but the former police chief was a playboy who just left it lie on his desk (or maybe he had a better sense of proportion than his successor). He may have had sense enough to realize that it was ridiculous. But a new man came in and

when he saw this thing with the Generalissimo's seal on it, he decided he'd better do something about it.

Thanks to the girls, we had some pretty influential connections in the secret service, even though we were not supposed to know what they were. We went to one of them and he arranged a gentleman's agreement with the police that they wouldn't arrest Wally if he didn't try to leave town. I could go up to Chungking and try to get the thing straightened out.

I hopped a bus to Chungking-two day's journey over an incredible road. You'd look down the cliff and see the old, dead cars and buses lying on their backs, burned out. Of course, we knew lots of people in Chungking, but it was Chinese New Year time and hard to get anything done very fast. My sister-in-law took me to the head of the Military Tribunal, from which the warrant had been issued, and he stamped an order rescinding the warrant, and said, "Go back to Kweiyang and tell them this is on the way. It will get there in a few weeks." So that took care of that.

We stayed at Great China University for three years, I think. My daughters Peggy and Sally were born there in a maternity hospital, which was just a big mud hut with dirt floor and thatched roof. It had a 16-bed ward, two delivery rooms, a nursery and a utility room. Cotton cloth was stretched across in lieu of a ceiling to catch scorpions that might fall out of the thatch. When Peggy was born the person in charge--head nurse or chief midwife or whatever her title was--was one who had been trained at the Peking Union Medical College, and she was very stiff and starchy, and not about to compromise her standards in any way. She would not tolerate dogs in the ward. They would sneak in if anyone left the door open, but they were shooed right out. So what we did have was rats, which crept out of their holes

around the edges of the floor at meal time to eat the crumbs that fell on the floor. Otherwise it was a very good hospital. The woman doctors were excellent. One was a professor at the Yale-in-China Medical School, which had refugeed to Kweiyang. All the nurses were trained midwives.

When Sally was born there was a different person in charge, who was more flexible in her ideas. She felt that dogs were preferable to rats, so at meal time the door would open and dogs came in and cleaned up anything that fell on the floor, so there was nothing left for the rats.

I: I thought maybe the dogs ate the rats.

LIU: I suppose they may have sometimes, but in China dogs are not supposed to catch rats. There is a proverb, "Dog catch rat, everyone meddle with public business." Catching rats is cats' business. Watching the house is dogs' business. My scotty dogs were considered very peculiar because they would hunt rats. The best thing was that the scotties would kill the rats but not eat them. Cats would eat them and get intestinal parasites and die, so it was very hard to keep a cat. I could go into a long thing about rats.

I: Go ahead.

LIU: Rats, of course, were everywhere. The construction of the buildings was such that there was no possible way of eliminating them unless you just wiped out the whole city and started over.

I: You mean it was so even before the war?

LIU: Yes, always. So I used to have a battle of wits with the rats every night. Food or soap or anything remotely edible had to be fixed so rats couldn't get at it. But usually it was a losing battle. For instance, if I had a bowl of leftover food I might put it in the middle of the kitchen table, invert a larger bowl over that, and a still larger bowl over that, and a big, heavy crockery bowl over it all. And they might push all these things to the edge of the table, so they could crawl up underneath and get at the food.

I: They must have been pretty smart rats!

LIU: Don't look down your nose at a rat's intelligence. You know what the psychologists do with them.

I: These were great big rats?

LIU: Pretty fair size. They ate the buttons off my raincoat. They would eat any soap except Lifebuoy, which smelled of carbolic acid in those days.

After Peggy was born I didn't teach any more, but worked for a relief organization called the International Relief Committee. Our business was importing medical supplies and distributing them to civilian hospitals which had no other source of supply. We had trucks running all over Free China. One day we had an urgent telegram from Changsha to send a plague expert and medication. A Japanese plane had flown low over the city, dropping dirty rags and wheat, and they suspected that this wheat was infected with plague germs. I am not sure how the rags came into it. The local authorities had gathered up as much of the stuff as they could and burned it, but they knew they couldn't get it all. The local rats

were bound to get some of it. We located a plague expert sent out by the League of Nations and he rounded up a team and the sulfathiazole and other stuff he needed and hurried off. We were getting daily bulletins. Dead rats were found in the streets showing plague characteristics, and a woman died of something that looked pretty suspicious. They were very much afraid the thing would become a real epidemic, but the team got there in time to control it. There was no question that this had been a Japanese attempt at germ warfare.

I: Was that the only place you heard of?

LIU: The only one of which I had personal knowledge. I heard that it was tried in other places, but I don't know just where. Fortunately, the League of Nations had sent out several experts who knew how to cope.

I: That used to be Percy Watson's specialty, you know. He was so respected as a plague fighter that when he was on home leave once, and there was an outbreak of plague somewhere, the Chinese government sent for him to come back at once. They would give him full military powers and all the authority and money he needed to isolate the infected area and clean it up--kill the rats.

LIU: Where was that, do you know?

I: His home base was Shansi, but I think they called him to other parts of China as well, wherever plague would break out.

LIU: Was it more common in the west, then?

I: I don't know. There were certain parts of China where it was endemic. Shansi was one and some places in the north. There were little pockets of it in various parts of China. When the war with Japan began, Dr. Watson expressed the fear that troop movements through those pockets of endemic plague would result in epidemics.

LIU: When was it that the government called him back?

I: I don't really remember. It was before I went to China. His daughter, Edith, told me he used to wear a one-piece leather suit to minimize the chance of getting bitten by fleas. She said her mother always made her kiss him goodbye when he went off on those trips. She realized afterward that it was because he might not come back.

LIU: Did Percy Watson train himself in plague control, or did he become an expert through experience?

I: I'm sure he must have reinforced his experience by studying all there was to learn about it.

LIU: That seems to be what most of the doctors in China did. They couldn't just buzz-off to Johns Hopkins for graduate work.

I: Another thing I heard about concerned a famine in Shansi. I heard this second hand and can't vouch for the details. I don't know just what Percy Watson's authority was, but as I heard it, it was up to him to see what could be done about the famine. Obviously the only solution was to build a road that

food could be brought in from places that had it. There was plenty in other places, but no transportation. There was only a very limited amount of food available, and he had to make a decision that the only people who would get food were the able-bodied ones who could work on building the road. Because without the road, all would starve. We hear discussions nowadays of situations like this. The principle is called triage, and people get into big ethical discussions about it. He didn't have the name, but he had the game.

LIU: So the government appointed him to do it?

I: I don't know whether it was by government appointment, or through the relief agencies that send the food, or what. I don't see how food could have been sent in any significant quantity because there was no way to bring it in. I have only a sketchy idea of that story, because I heard it from my mother when I was quite little.

LIU: To get back to my story. After Peggy was born I had two cribs made, one for home and one for the office and I went to work at the International Relief Committee. At first it was called International Red Cross, but the real one was in Geneva and objected, so we took another name with the same initials, so as not to have to repaint the trucks. This was three minutes' walk from my home on Dragon Spring Street, so I took Peggy with me and put her in the crib in the office. I was allowed to take time to diaper and nurse her during the day, as they were hard up for help. I worked there until shortly before Sally was born, at which time the office moved to Chungking. John Hlavacek, who had been a Carleton-in-China boy, got permission from Dr. Vestling to stay on and become

a truck driver for us after he was through at the school. He went on from there to become a United Press correspondent. Traveling all over China on our trucks had given him a background that few people had, so when America got into the war and more correspondents were needed, he had a good chance. After the war he became bureau chief for U. P. in New Delhi, and I don't know what he's done since.

I: I was going to ask whether this International Relief Committee got its funds mainly from America, or was it really international?

LIU: They got money from a lot of sources. Some was American, but I don't really know where it all came from. We handled what were called the "Java remittances," which were contributions made by Chinese in the South Seas to the Chinese war effort. They would not have been allowed to send it to the Chinese government, so some private agency had to receive the money and pass it on to the government.

I: Did the Red Cross enter into it?

LIU: Not directly. After Pearl Harbor the American Red Cross sent lots of supplies for us to distribute, but we weren't actually connected with them in any way.

I: They just sent it through you?

LIU: We received and distributed the stuff they sent out. Not all of it. They had their own agencies, too, and some of it went to the government for military use. Our organization was very necessary because the government was supplying only military hospitals. Civilian hospitals had no source of

supply except us, so we imported things from Hong Kong or Haiphong or wherever we could get them, until after those places fell and the only way for things to come in, was over the Hump.

I: You could get it from Haiphong sometimes?

LIU: After Hong Kong fell, but before the Japanese captured Haiphong, we would bring things up the railroad to Kunming, and from there by truck. Then for a while we could still get them up the road from Rangoon. But after Rangoon was lost, there was nothing left but the Hump and for a while we didn't know how we would ever get anything again.

When the American Air Force decided to operate in China, they made it a condition that they should have control of all plane cargoes into China. Nothing could be brought in by plane without their permission. Their idea was that they didn't want to knock themselves out bringing in military supplies, while other planes were bringing luxuries for the civilians. This made a certain amount of sense, but pretty soon the shoe was on the other foot, as they were bringing beer and cigarettes and candy bars for American fliers, while we couldn't get any medical supplies. We heard that the American Red Cross was sending mountains of things which were piling up in Calcutta, and we couldn't get them because the American military wouldn't give clearance for them.

We wrote to the top brass in Washington and New Delhi and everywhere we could think of, because hospitals were writing to us, "If you can't fill this order, we'll have to close our doors." One of the first things we ran out of was surgical gloves, but then other things were running out, and it was getting to where we had scarcely anything left.

Of course, the top brass told us that they had all they could do to keep the American fliers provided for in the style to which they were accustomed. We were going frantic, knowing the American Red Cross things were there, just out of reach.

I felt sure if I could have gone to any American base and asked the men if they would do without one days beer and cigarettes, so the civilian hospitals could stay open, they'd have been delighted to help, but their officers wouldn't make this decision for them.

And then there was a measles epidemic in Kweiyang, and children were dying like flies. Forty kids died in one short street. We don't think of measles as a terminal illness in this country, but there the children were living on a wartime diet, in cold houses heated by charcoal braziers which do give off carbon monoxide, and they just didn't have enough resistance. The measles would go into pneumonia and they would die.

Peggy got sick and I took off work to care for her, but I went each day to report to my office chief, Dr. Marian Manly, who was a pediatrician and obstetrician and was on leave of absence from running a school for midwives. When I told her that Peggy was unconscious most of the time, waking only enough to cough now and then, she said, "Sulfapyradine." I said, "Where am I supposed to get any?" and she said, "Don't worry. The first plane load of American Red Cross things has just come in and we'll get that box out first."

I: How did it come in--by air?

LIU: Yes. They had finally gotten clearance. It was flown to Kunming and our trucks brought it from there. She got the sulfapyradine box open first and gave me five tablets. It took only three of them to fix Peggy up, so I could put the other two back into stock. When anyone makes cynical remarks to me about the Red Cross, I have my answer. They were good to me again later, but that's another story.

I: What year are we up to now?

LIU: Peggy was born in May 1941, so this would have been 1942. Wally was still teaching at Great China University. A professor's salary was getting to be pretty slim pickings because everybody, from the university president down to the man who swept the floor, was on a subsistence level. There was no other standard for anyone. The inflation was going on and on, and, of course, it was one of the big concerns of everybody. It had been going on since the beginning of the war. The first 100% general increase in prices took about three years. The second took about 18 months and the third about nine months. By that time, the curve was so steep, there was no sense in trying to keep track of it.

I: The first doubling, you say?

LIU: The first doubling took three years and then that level doubled again in 18 months, and that again in about nine. It got to where nobody in his right mind would work for money. Our salaries were figured in terms of rice, or possibly other commodities as well, but the mainstay of our salary was rice. A professor would get a picul (over 100 pounds) of rice per month, and a few yards of cotton cloth per year, and occasionally some lamp oil. We got some money too, but, of course, being a government university, we got money straight off the printing press.

I: They made it?

LIU: Yes, and because our money was always fresh, I found out that the country people thought we belonged to a class that could print our own money. I heard great discussions as to whether one person or another had money-printing privileges.

I: Who did print this fresh money?

LIU: The government. Inflations happen when governments spend money that doesn't exist. Think of that in relation to our government's habit of deficit financing.

It got to where, in an effort to cut everything down to subsistence, they said the rice allowance was just to assure our food, and if both man and wife taught they should have only one rice allowance between them. The wives said, "Nothing doing! We aren't suckers enough to work for money. We'll quit first." They got their rice.

I: You could sell rice.

LIU: Yes. It was expected that you would sell the rice you didn't eat. Of course you needed meat and vegetables, too. The rice was what enabled you to get along, because although you did get some money, it was not dependable. It would spoil between one payday and the next. But you could sell your rice at the going rate when you needed money. It was an inflation hedge.

I: Was it the university that tried to deny the rice allowance to women?

LIU: Yes. Another situation was that elementary school teachers were not getting raises and it was becoming more and more impossible to live on their original salaries. When they asked for more, they were told they were supposed to be public-spirited, working for the love of their work, etc., and they shouldn't be so materialistic.

I: Was the government saying this?

LIU: Yes. Finally, the teachers in Kunming took a full page ad in the paper, in great big Chinese characters saying, "People with empty stomachs cannot love their country."

I: Well said!

LIU: I could go on and on about the inflation, but I had better just give you a copy of a whole article I wrote about it once and skip ahead here.

When we had been three years at Great China University, the government was organizing a new provincial university at Hua Chi, a very beautiful scenic place about 13 miles from Kweiyang. Wally and I became teachers there.

I: Where was this again?

LIU: Hua Chi. Quite a famous scenic spot. Sally was quite a young baby then. Wally went out in the late winter and I followed in the spring. I had had typhus shortly before that and was still weak.

Sally was born November 21, 1942, and on Christmas Day I went to the hospital with typhus. She had to go too, because she couldn't be cared for at home. Everybody thought it would be the end of nursing her, and milk powder cost about $20,000 a pound then.

I: I should think there would be more danger in giving her typhus.

LIU: Typhus isn't transmitted from person-to-person, but by the bite of a rat flea or rat louse. Mine was the flea-borne kind, which is less serious. They couldn't tell at first whether it was typhus or typhoid. They thought it was probably typhoid until the fever broke on the 14th day, which is diagnostic for typhus.

I: 14 days is a long time.

LIU: And it was a high fever. I'll give you a poem I wrote about it.

I: It takes a long time to recover from that, doesn't it?

LIU: Yes, it does. It damages your nervous system. For months afterward I would yell for the servant and then try frantically to remember what I had wanted her for, or go to the cupboard and stand wondering what I had wanted inside. Someone else who had it about the same time had been a fine piano player and she had to start all over with finger exercises.

I: I've often heard that people cannot stand the slightest noise after typhus.

LIU: I don't remember that especially. Anyhow I recovered.

I: And you could still nurse the baby then?

LIU: I was doggoned if I wasn't going to nurse that baby with milk powder at that price. We'd have had to get a wet nurse.

I believe in nursing my own babies anyway. I made them bring her for five minutes at the beginning of each feeding. I was too weak to turn over and give her both sides, but she would suck a little at the side that happened to be down at the moment, and then they would take her away to the nursery for a bottle. The rest of the time she lay in a crib in my unheated room. Twice in the three weeks or so that we were there, a lovely graduate nurse from Hong Kong came in her free time and built up a charcoal fire in the room and gave Sally a bath. The bottle she had disagreed with her, and her stools were irritating, so by the time I took her home her skin was like raw beef. The nurses told me I didn't have milk. Foreigners don't have milk, you know.

I: The Chinese believed that?

LIU: Fortunately, I had read a book that said practically any woman able to make a baby was able to feed it. Anyhow, we came through with Sally getting her proper food.

Wally was moving out to Hua Ch'i, and I didn't go right away. I went out in late April, when Peggy was nearly two, and I taught there for two years. That's the scene of the book I wrote.

I: What book is that?

LIU: Little Wu and the Watermelons, which won the Follett Award for children's literature in 1954.

I: Is that readily available?

LIU: It's out of print now, but I think most libraries in the area have it and it was required reading in the Kiddie Literature course at the University of Minnesota, for some years. This book is very authentic in its picture of China at that time. It's been used in the schools in Taiwan and was used at one time as the basis for the English lessons on the radio in Taiwan. The strange thing about that is that the main character is not Chinese at all. He is a Miao tribesboy, in a tribal village in Kweichow.

I: Was life out in the village much different from in town?

LIU: Yes. We didn't have to worry about air-raids.

I: Did Kweiyang have air-raids?

LIU: There were very few during most of the time we were there, but just about the time Peggy was born, there was a rash of them. I had to carry her out to the shelter on her second day, I think. The doctor came by in the morning and told me not to sit up more than I had to for another day. Half an hour later the alarm went off, and they asked me if I felt able to carry her--so I did.

In Hua Ch'i we lived in half of the second floor of a so-called foreign style house, which is to say that it was of gray brick with glass casement windows. I couldn't see anything else foreign about it. Four families shared this house, and there was space where I planted a big garden. The first year I didn't realize in time that animals are not fenced in around there. If you want a garden, you fence it in.

Finally we moved to a much smaller house across the road and papered the walls with old American Consulate news bulletins, which was the only good white paper available. We laid in large stocks of charcoal, as the price was rising rapidly. The Japanese were driving up the railroad through Kwangsi province and we had to contemplate being refugees again. The railroad didn't come within 60 miles of us (that was the end of the line), but they could keep on beyond it. Because Wally had a truck with which he had been eking out our livelihood, he was put in charge of evacuating the university to the mountains.

It seemed like a good time for me to bring the children home to America for a visit, as my mother had died and my father was lonely.

We were evacuated by the American Army. The only other American in the area was a Professor March, who was on a Fulbright fellowship, but we also took Chinese who were in any way dependents of Americans. We left on Thanksgiving day on a truck for Chungking.

As we were leaving I saw something I had never imagined. I had thought of Chinese soldiers in terms of the miserable lines of conscripts I had seen, or local garrisons, far from impressive. But now there were magnificent troops coming down to intercept the Japanese. They were hard, tough, well-equipped, well-dressed.

I: Were these special troops?

LIU: Yes. We heard tell that the Generalissimo's own crack division was among them.

I: He did have special ones that he held back and didn't want to use, didn't he? He still refused to use them in Burma. I wonder why.

LIU: Whoever these were, they were experienced, skilled soldiers, who would handle any situation effectively.

I: This was a very "close to home" situation.

LIU: Yes. Chungking was already getting jittery, and Kweiyang was very jittery, with the Japanese only 60 miles away. These fine soldiers were coming down to cut them off, and they were really a sight to behold.

I: You don't know the name of the division?

LIU: No, but they were tough cookies. We strongly suspect that they ate our last Scotty dog, Jeannie's son Bobby.

Wally was busy moving the university, so he didn't even get home for two days. When he came to discuss what we should do, I was packing like mad. While he was there Professor March came and said all Americans were ordered out. The army would have a truck waiting for us at Erh Chiao (Second Bridge) near Kweiyang at eight the next morning and we were to be there. Wally left me to pack as best I could while he went to find transportation. This was not easy, because the pony carts, which were our regular means of going the 13 miles to Kweiyang, were being commandeered by the military or were hiding for fear they would be. We found one man who would try it for the huge price of $3,000. He brought him home and hid him in our yard until we were ready to go, which was about three o'clock. That cart had to carry the kids and me, and all the stuff we would have to sell in Chungking to raise money for the trip home.

My brother-in-law had just come two days before from Tientsin, bringing me a steamer trunk full of winter clothes

and things which would have been great treasure if I were staying, but I had to leave them behind or sell them. He and Wally took turns on the bicycle so as to come into town with us and I managed to wangle permission for him to come on the truck with us to help me with the children.

The army people at Erh Chiao said we would have to go into Kweiyang for the night, as there was no place to stay in Erh Chiao. By American standards they were right, but we did find a place that would do. You came in down a couple of steps to a very black floor where they made coal balls. Peggy fell down in the coal dust. Behind that there was a little room with two wooden beds and a table between them and a loose-fitting window above that. The room was built like a bridge over a rushing stream.

I spread a big bed sheet over one of the beds to try to keep the vermin from getting up to where we were. The kids and I were going to spend the night all in one bed for warmth, as it was rapidly getting cold. It had been warm and fine when we left home, but that evening winter settled down to stay and the wind was whistling in around the window, and I was trying to figure out where I had packed warm clothing.

Wally went scouting for something to eat, and all he could find was a vendor of t'ang yuan. These are little round balls of glutinous rice flour with brown sugar in the middle, and they are supposed to be a great TREAT, but I can't stand them. That was all we could get to eat. There was nothing to drink, but Wally asked the man to dip out some of the water the balls were boiled in for us. Then he went into Kweiyang on the bicycle to try to collect $2,000 that someone owed him. We survived the night and he came back early in the morning and we got on the truck. The children and I were in the cab with the driver. The rest of the people were in the back of the truck.

When we got to Chungking someone arranged for us to stay in an extra room in a dormitory belonging to the Bank of China. Wally hadn't come. There was one fair-sized bed which the children and I shared. One leg of the bed broke, so we had to pile suitcases under it to hold it up, and when we needed anything from the suitcases we had to take the bed down.

Chungking was having one of its periodic water famines. For some reason, there was very little water available. All we could have was one teakettleful per day for drinking, washing, and washing our clothes. Of course, the children really needed their clothes washed every day, and they got dingier and dingier. We ate out and tried to get as much tea and soup as possible outside, so as to have more water for washing. I enjoyed eating out because it was a northern-style restaurant and I had been sort of homesick for northern-style food.

Being American, I was allowed to buy foreign exchange for the trip home at the official exchange rate of 20 to 1. The American Army insisted on having this rate maintained for their benefit, which gave them a terrific advantage in all their dealings with China. It was completely unrealistic. I could sell things on the black market which was more like 20,000 to 1. I'm not sure of the figure, as it was constantly changing. But I could sell a cake of Lux toilet soap on the open market for $600, and this would give me $25 of U. S. money at the official rate. A cake of Guest Ivory would have brought even more,but it had been eated by rats.

Practically all business at that time was done in what were called auction shops. There was no way that shopkeepers could replenish their stocks through commercial channels, but people had all kinds of things they had saved as inflation hedges and when they needed money, they would

take something to the auction shop and leave it on consignment. When you wanted to buy anything, you just had to hope that there was one available.

Wally came when he could and we took our soap and typewriter and a pair of longjohns and lots of other things to an auction shop and easily raised enough to buy the U. S. $5,600 that I would be allowed to take for the journey to America and a year's living. I was in the early stages of pregnancy at the time and had to have a rabbit test to make sure that I really had three children in order to buy that much foreign exchange.

The children and I flew the Hump in January, 1945. Because enormous numbers of missionaries were leaving China at that time, accommodations in Calcutta were extremely tight. A refugee camp for missionaries had been setup in the race course in Calcutta. People were crowded in there in army cots set so close together you couldn't walk between them, but had to get into bed over one end. There was one cold water faucet for 600 people, or something like that. I wasn't a missionary, but as I sat in the airport at three A.M. waiting to go through customs, a young man I had met in Kweiyang came up and asked me whether I had a place to stay. He arranged for me to go to this place, and we were there for three days until Irene Vincent, who had worked with me at the International Relief Committee, wangled a room for me at the China Travel Service Hostel. This was a big old boarding house that had been taken over to provide accommodations for people coming out of China. It was primarily for Chinese, but a few foreigners were included. We lived there for nearly six months.

Calcutta is reputed to be about the worst place there is for heat, but I didn't find it as bad as Chungking. In Calcutta, at least in the part where we were, there was always a breeze in the evening. If you were in one of the grand hotels downtown where foreigners stayed, it could have been as bad as Chungking.

I: What time of year was this?

LIU: We were there from January until July or late June.

I: Well, Chungking is really hot too.

LIU: Chungking is horrible. No breeze. It may be better since the bombing opened it up a little. I remember coming down the mountain, across the river in the early morning and seeing a dead pancake of yellowish smog over Chungking, like a solid muffin.

I: Is it cold in winter?

LIU: Not really. It doesn't freeze, but there's fog and everybody coughs. It's a miserable climate.

I: Is Chengtu better?

LIU: Yes, by all reports. I never actually got to Chengtu. They said in Chungking that if the sun came out in winter the dogs would bark.

We stayed in the China Travel Service until June, I think. I was haunting the travel services trying to get some way out of there and there just weren't any ships taking civilians. Or if they did, they weren't taking pregnant women. There was one Navy ship that took a few civilians, and four babies were born on board. After that the American Express agent was ordered to inquire specifically of any women who looked the least bit stout, married or unmarried.

It wasn't looking very hopeful. Irene Vincent was arranging for me to go to friends of hers in Travancore, one of the native states in southern India, to setup housekeeping until the baby was big enough to travel.

I: You'd given up?

LIU: I had to figure something out. But then word came that the U. S. government was sending the Gripsholm to clear out all Americans, born or unborn. They would also take 400 Chinese who were waiting to get to this country and pick up 400 Americans who had been stranded in Greece during the war.

I: This must have been the second trip of the Gripsholm.

LIU: No, this was not one of the two trips for exchange of prisoners of war. This was just a response to the fact that so many Americans were stuck over there.

I: The war was over?

LIU: The war wasn't over until August. V-E Day came while we were in Bombay waiting for the boat. Because of that, we didn't have to sail around South Africa, but could come through the Mediterranean. V-J wasn't until August, just before my baby was born.

I: It would be considerably quicker to come that way.

LIU: Yes, much. Even so it took a month. The British were supposed to take us as far as Alexandria and the Gripsholm

would pick us up there, but then they backed out and the Gripsholm had to come all the way to Bombay. The Swedish crew didn't like the idea of going through the Arabian Sea, which is terribly hot and rough, so they went on strike, and we all finally had to pay an extra $50 on our tickets to get them to come.

I: Well, they were probably tired of going back and forth around the work, picking up these refugees.

LIU: They were a nice crew. They told us stories about the prisoners of war.

I: They did? We were on the first trip.

LIU: When the Japanese ship came from one way and the Gripsholm from the other, they met and had to exchange their passengers directly, without any time to clean the ship between. So they wanted to keep the passengers on deck until they could clean up down below. They had a big feed spread out on deck---all the things that Americans in prison camps would have been dreaming of: roast beef, turkey, ham, ice cream, cheese, apple pie, the works. Then the doctor gave them a lecture about how they must eat only a very little bit or they would get sick.

I: People did suffer from overeating.

LIU: One of the stewards told me there were two nuns who ate and ate and then went out and vomited and came back for more, several times.

I: They also handed out chocolate candy bars to everyone, and that was a treat. Nobody had seen one for years.

LIU: You know, when we got to Chungking, Peggy was so unsophisticated that she had never seen a doorknob or a bathtub or ice cream or chocolate. We met an American Army captain who was just bowled over by the idea that these things were new to her. He gave her candy bars, which I didn't really want her to have, and he thought she must be introduced to ice cream. They had it in the officers' mess regularly. One evening when she was already asleep, a boy came from the mess with a thermos bottle full of ice cream. I wakened her and got her to take a taste of it. She just said, "Cold" and went back to sleep.

I: Well, you had yourself a treat at least.

LIU: Yes, a lonely one.

Back to the Gripsholm. I was terribly big and whenever I failed to show up in the dining room there would be rumors that I had a nine-pound boy, or twins, or whatever. I mentioned earlier that the Red Cross had been good to me another time? Well, on the ship there were Red Cross representatives, and they had everyone write down what he would need when he landed and they would radio ahead and try to have everything ready. Hotels were hard to get, and you had to have priorities for train travel, and, of course, we would all need ration cards right away. I said I had no idea what I would need--a train, a plane, a room, or an ambulance at ship's side. They said, "Just relax. Whatever you need will be ready."

I: Were you worried?

LIU: I never really doubted that it would be all right, but I didn't trust the ship's doctor. In Bombay the baby's position had been transverse, and the doctor who corrected it said to have the ship's doctor check it weekly to make sure it didn't flop back. The doctor wouldn't do that. He said, "I've delivered 600 babies and never yet had trouble with position." My reaction was that a Chinese midwife would do more deliveries than that in her training, and that by law of averages, it was about time for him to have trouble. But there were good mission doctors on board, and one of them kept track of me and could have been called if necessary.

I: Ship's doctors are a little notorious, I think.

LIU: So we got to New York. The passengers had to stand in long lines for FBI clearance and I don't know what all. Someone said, "We don't want you to stand in line," so I was led to the head of every line and soon was ready to go ashore. It was late enough so I decided to eat lunch on board. While I was eating a man in uniform came up and introduced himself as Major so-and-so of the Public Health Service. He said, "We have a plane ticket for you at two o'clock. Finish your lunch and meet me under the Letter L and we'll get you through customs fast." So I got out there and my baggage didn't come down. It was all in a mountain on the deck, being winched down in nets, and there was no way to sort mine out, so we waited and waited.

At last the Major said, "It's too late for that plane, but a man from the airlines is going to wait at the gate to put you on a later flight today if you like." So we waited some more, and finally I said, "Go tell the airlines man to go home and relax, but to keep me in mind for the next day or so. I'm just too tired to fly today."

I: Did you consider just forgetting your baggage, now that you were home?

LIU: Never entered my head. They brought me a big stack of letters. I had written to Dad that there must be people I knew in New York, but I was out of touch, so would he put out feelers for me. So here was this big stack of letters and out of the lot there were only two that could put me up for that night: a Quaker couple I had known in Chungking, and a Jewish couple who had been in the Chinese Maritime Customs in Tientsin. I was driven in a Red Cross station wagon to Hudson View Gardens where I stayed with the Quaker couple (Arnold and Lois Vaught) for a couple of days, and all of my other friends came to see me there.

It seemed that since I hadn't flown on an emergency basis that day, I would have to get a doctor's clearance before flying. The doctor said, "I'm going to certify you, and I hope you make it, but the head is already engaged." So I got on the plane and told the stewardess what the situation was, and that I might have to get off at any stop and leave her to take the kids to Minneapolis. She said, "Don't worry. We can arrange it."

Dad and my sister met me in Minneapolis and drove me down to Northfield and the baby didn't come for two more weeks--August 19--just after the atom bomb and V-J.

I want to go back to where we waited so long on the dock for my luggage to come down. When everything else was squared away, the inspector told me to go and pick up the ration cards for me and the kids. "Down to the end of the pier and around the corner about a block." Then he looked at me and said, "Sit down. I'll get them for you." I'd just come from India where we had to stand in long lines for things and just as we

would be near the head of the line the kids would have to go to the bathroom and we'd be back at the end of the line again. So when this man said, "You sit down and I'll get the card for you," I just sat down on my suitcase and bawled. Here we were back in a country where being pregnant rates you some consideration.

I: It must have been just such a relief to be back.

LIU: Rick was born and when he was three years old, we went back to China. That was 1948.

I: You picked another bad time to go to China.

LIU: We went back expecting to stay, but had to leave again in eight months. We reached Shanghai in August, 1948 and left in April, 1949. We had thought I would be able to get a good job, because there were so many American agencies working out there. It turned out that since I hadn't been hired before leaving the States, I couldn't be hired as American staff. American staff had to have FBI clearance, so if they hired me at all it would be as local staff at local pay scale.

I: Weren't there any FBI agents over there who could have checked you?

LIU: Apparently not, and anyway FBI clearance took several months. What happened was that the U. S. Information Service had a dirty job that no one wanted to do. The American Library Association had sent enormous amounts of books and periodicals over to rebuild the war-damaged Chinese college and university libraries. These had been lying in a warehouse in Shanghai

three years, as no one wanted the dirty job of sorting them and distributing them. So what they did, rather than to put me on the payroll as a local staff, was to let me contract to do the job. They assigned me a Chinese girl with library training, two Chinese clerks to help with the sorting, two carpenters to build shipping cases and two men to do the heavy lifting. We worked our heads off in the warehouse distributing those books.

I: It's good that you did, or they might still be there.

LIU: There were some that were supposed to go to a medical college in Loyang, and the agency told me there was no way anything could be shipped to Loyang, which is up in north central China. I said there had to be a way. There had to be trucks running between Chungking and Loyang. But they said they had been unable to find any way. So Wally inquired a little among his friends and found one whose father was in Chungking, doing business with a Loyang firm and had trucks going up empty and coming back full all the time. They not only took the books, but took them for free and wrote an appreciative letter about how nice it was for America to do this, and how happy they were to help. Boy, was I a hero around there!

That job was finished and I got a job with the International Refugee Organization, a United Nations agency. Our job was to try to repatriate the refugees, or if they didn't want to go home, find some other place for them to go. Many couldn't go home, of course, because their countries had gone Communist. Many were stateless and had to be provided with United Nations passports.

I: Which refugees were these now?

LIU: Every kind. The White Russians had been in China for two or three generations by this time and were desperate to get away before the Communists took over. They believed that if they ever met a Communist, they would be shot on the spot.

I: They would really be in a tough position.

LIU: They thought so, anyway. Then there were all the ones that had come during World War II because Shanghai was one of the few places open to them in the world: Germans, Jews, Hungarians, all kinds of people. Thousands of them.

I: Yes, I know. We were in Shanghai in 1947-48. I was in school and half the school was refugee students and teachers.

LIU: We were trying desperately to find places where these people could go. Every time the news got worse, hundreds more would come and sign up for resettlement, and we would try to locate them anywhere in the world. But it is a very inhospitable world. We might get six visas to one country and two to another, and a dozen somewhere else, but never enough to begin to meet the need. We had three thousand Balts who would have made wonderful settlers for Alaska, but immigration rules could notbe relaxed. So it was just a discouraging, heartbreaking job.

I: Was Michael Blumenthal one of the ones you helped? Our new Secretary of the Treasury? He was a refugee in Shanghai.

LIU: I'm sure I couldn't identify any individuals at this point. But I do have to give a big hand to Little Israel. They were just getting started and struggling so hard to get organized, but they said they would take any Jew who wanted to come. We sent them three chartered shiploads of Jews. There were some who didn't want to go there.

I: I didn't know that. I had many Jewish classmates in school and had often wondered what became of them.

LIU: Well, we sent three chartered shiploads, and if you have any idea what that involves...

I: You mean making all the arrangements?

LIU: The arrangements, the expense...

I: Who paid for it?

LIU: IRO, the International Refugee Organization.

I: How many people would that amount to?

LIU: I don't know. Several hundred on each ship.

Of all the people who didn't want to go back where they came from, the Austrians took the cake. One of our staff members was Viennese. He said, "How could I go back and greet old friends on the street, not knowing which one betrayed my family to the gas chamber?"

I: I can see that it would be difficult. And there was no other place they could go?

LIU: Well, we kept on struggling to get a few visas here and a few there, but it was getting pretty urgent. It was obvious that we wouldn't get them all out of Shanghai in time that way. A lot of people had been stuck in Peking when the Communists took over, and we were still providing some food for them, but we didn't want the same thing to happen in Shanghai. The Philippines agreed to let us set-up a temporary refugee camp on an abandoned American navy base on Samar Island. We had to promise to have the people out of there in six months, which we knew perfectly well we couldn't do, but once they were there it could be worked out. At least they'd be out of China.

I: Some countries did expel them. Mexico let them stay one year and then sent them away with no place to go.

LIU: I don't know the end of the story of the Samar Island camp, because I came home myself, but I know that we knew when we sent them that it wouldn't be possible to move them all in six months.

The children and I left on the last evacuation ship for Americans, the hospital ship Repose, about April 27 or so. We had been told that we would have at least three hours' notice if it became necessary to evacuate. Jeeps with loud-speakers would cruise through the streets and there would be the sirens.

I: Was this Shanghai?

LIU: Yes. There was a meeting where it was explained. If the time came when it was necessary for Americans to be evacuated, they would try to give us at least three hours' notice--preparation time. It turned out that we had over a day's notice. There was a monumental traffic jam in Shanghai. When we got to the collection center, they had an army field kitchen setup to feed us lunch. Eventually an LST (Landing Ship Tanks) showed up and took us down the river to the hospital ship Repose, which was a beautiful ship.

I: I think some of the students from the Shanghai American School went on that. I had graduated the year before. This must have been 1949?

LIU: Yes. April '49. Because it was a hospital ship, we took the wounded British sailors to Hong Kong. A British gunboat had been bombed in the Yangtze and many sailors wounded. The British didn't have a hospital ship in Far Eastern waters at that time, so we took them. We stayed in Hong Kong harbor for five days, living on the ship, but free to go ashore. Out of gratitude for our bringing the wounded, the British Navy undertook to show us a good time while we were there. They took us swimming at Repulse Bay and to visit the Tiger Balm Palace and all the usual sight-seeing and fun.

I: Was Wally with you then?

LIU: No. The consulate tried, but couldn't whomp up a visa for him fast enough. Since he couldn't come on an emergency basis that day, he had to sign up for the quota.

We kept asking the people on the ship what they were going to do with us. They didn't know.

I: You had no destination?

LIU: They were going to Manila, and after that they didn't know what. They went to Manila just long enough to take on fuel. We weren't allowed to go ashore, except one person who wanted to stay there. Then they headed for Japan. All we could get out of them was that in Japan they would turn us over to the Army and they didn't know what the Army would do with us.

When we got to Yokosuka there was a gale blowing, and the pilot wouldn't take us into port, so we lay there for two days waiting for the wind to go down. It turned out that the Army hadn't known we were coming until they had a phone call from the ship as we lay waiting.

I: I'm sure they were overjoyed.

LIU: I've got to give the Army a lot of credit for what they did for us on such short notice. They took us from the boat to an officer's mess for lunch and then they assembled in one big hall, all the people we might have business with: Consulate, Civilian Employment Agency, shipping companies, etc.

I: That was pretty clever.

LIU: It was great. We did whatever we had to do, except that they didn't allow us to exchange any money for yen, so there was a problem about postage stamps to let our folks in America know we were coming.

They arranged that as many of us as wanted to could sail the next day on the General Gordon, with third-class berths and first-class meals. Anyone who passed up that chance would have to arrange his own transportation. So, a great many of us went on the Gordon, which had been a troop ship during the war. When it was a troop ship there were three tiers of bunks, but one had been removed, so we had two tiers of bunks in what should have been the hold of the ship.

I: We went on the General Gordon in 1946.

LIU: I remember one American woman who was not about to sleep in third-class, which was full of Filipinos. Her little girl would get all kinds of horrible diseases and their things would be stolen, blah, blah, blah. So she got squeezed into a cabin with 11 other white women and children, where they were much more uncomfortable than we were in third-class.

I: Did you go third-class?

LIU: Yes, and it was all right.

I: We couldn't believe those long bathrooms.

LIU: With no curtains or anything. You know how the Japanese are about such things. The first day out I was in one of these with two facing rows of seats and a Japanese man came in and sat down opposite me.

I: Did they have men and women using the same...?

LIU: No, they weren't supposed to, but Japanese have no feeling about privacy at all. When we were first in Shanghai, we stayed with a brother-in-law in an apartment in what had been the Japanese Concession. The toilet seat was in a corner of the kitchen. When we were there there was a curtain around it, but the Japanese hadn't had any curtain.

I found the Filipinos delightful to travel with. The men are wonderful husbands. The women were seasick the whole way because their husband waited on them hand and foot. They brought them their meals, held their hands, held the cans when they vomited, and babied them so that they were just sick the whole way. I heard the stewardess telling them that if they would get up and be active like me they would be all right. I had to. I hadn't any husband to hold my hand, and I had three kids to take care of. The men were put out of our section at night, at eight, and not let back in until seven in the morning. It was very pleasant and that was the end of our China experience.

I: So then you came back to Northfield?

LIU: Yes.

I: That was quite a story. Can you think of anything you've left out?

LIU: Of course, I've left out an awful lot.

I: Any generalizations you could make?

LIU: I'll tell you one thing we used to observe sometimes. Young people who were looking for a cause to live for would go and talk to the missionaries about Christianity, and not finding what they wanted there, they would go off to Yenan and join the Communists.

I: That's rather interesting.

LIU: They were young and idealistic, wanting something to cling to and they didn't find it except among the Reds.

I: Certainly many of them thought they found it there. Some missionaries were sympathetic toward Communism--probably not many.

LIU: There's one good story about how my husband eventually got out of Shanghai. He was under the Communists for five months and had to go through those interminable indoctrination sessions and confessions that you've heard of. He couldn't think of anything to confess. One day the cadre said to him, "Mr. Liu, you haven't confessed." He said he really didn't know what to confess. He had always treated his servants well and hadn't embezzled any money.

"What do you teach in the university?"

"Economics."

"Did you teach your students about Karl Marx?"

"Of course."

"What did you teach them about Karl Marx?"

"I said he made the same mistake as the physiocrats. The physiocrats said that land was the only factor that could produce a surplus and Marx said that labor was the only factor that could produce a surplus. They are both one-sided."

"Ah, Mr. Liu, you gave your students a wrong interpretation of Marx. We will expect you to confess this tomorrow."

So he spent the night wondering how he could confess a wrong interpretation of Marx when he didn't believe he had made one. The next day he was not called on to confess and he went home half expecting a knock on the door in the night. Sure enough, one came.

At this point, I should flash back a few years to when he was dean of the College of Law and Commerce in Kweichow University. In that position he had access to such things as the lists of students that the police suspected of being Communists. The university had an agreement with the police that they would not come onto the campus to arrest a student. If they wanted a student, they would wait until he stepped off campus.

There was a student that Wally thought the world of, an extremely bright and capable boy, who was on that list. His family was in the South Seas, so he wouldn't have anyone to help him if he were arrested. Wally remembered how he himself had been a student in Hankow during the short-lived Communist regime there, and he had participated in the People's Courts and all that sort of thing. He had outgrown it, and he thought this boy might outgrow it too. There was no sense in letting him be imprisoned or maybe killed.

When Wally heard that there was going to be a big round-up of Communist students, he stood outside the dining hall reading the wall newspaper and when this boy came out he said, without even looking up, "I suggest that you stay on campus for the next few days."

The next day the boy was gone and they never found out what had become of him. The police said they didn't have him. He was just gone.

I: They never found out?

LIU: No. So here was Wally years later in Shanghai expecting a knock on the door. The knock came and it was that boy, now an important member of the Shanghai Communist administration.

I: So the Communists had helped him escape?

LIU: Of course they had a network. He came in and they had a very friendly chat. The boy said, "Mr. Liu, you do have a lot of poison in your mind." Wally said, "I believe what I believe." The boy said, "You know, you ought to leave the country." Wally said, "I should like nothing better, but I've had my application in for an exit permit for a long time and I don't get it." The boy said, "We'll have to see what can be done about that." A couple of days later the permit came.

I: That's pretty nice. The Chinese really repay a favor, don't they? Did Wally go to Taiwan from Shanghai?

LIU: He went to Hong Kong. As long as he was in Shanghai he was on preference quota for immigration to this country, which is for those who are born and domiciled in China. This would have gotten him admitted in a short time. But when he went to Hong Kong, he was no longer domiciled in China so he was put on non-preference list, which would take years. Then he went to Taiwan, which put him back on the preference list and eventually half a dozen of our different attempts to get him into this country paid off at once. Our immigration laws at that time were a nightmare of absurdity

and unreasonableness. For example, an American man could bring a Chinese wife and children in without question, but the Chinese husband of an American woman had a harder time to get in than a Chinese with no such connection.

I'll give you some of my poems about the war, separately. I am working on a novel about the war years and if it doesn't get published, the manuscript will probably end up in your hands. Some of them are quite interesting and you will probably get copies sometime.

I appreciate this chance to immortalize my reminiscences and hope they will be useful source material in the future.

As I was rereading the narrative, an experience came to mind concerning a Japanese train blocking an express.

Toward the end of the school year 1935-36, I formed the habit of catching the express train from Tientsin to Peking (Peiping in those days) late Saturday morning, reaching Peking in time for lunch. This train was the showpiece of the railroad system. Whatever might be true of the service in general, this train was always exactly on time and was clean and comfortable.

One morning, late enough in the year that it was very hot, Wally had promised to go to our favorite restaurant before I arrived and order lunch so that when I came we could eat quickly and catch a bus to the Western Hills for hiking. I made my usual dash from my last class to the station and got on the train just in comfortable time, but the train didn't start.

On the next track a Japanese military train was being made up with much bustle and importance. I sat there fuming at the delay and marveling at how the Japanese military acted as if they already owned North China. We waited and waited. There was no explanation of why the express was not leaving. I still can't think of any sensible reason why we should have been held up, unless it was just a capricious show of arrogance on the part of some Japanese officer.

At last the other train left, and ours pulled out behind it. We were on our way...or were we? After 20 minutes we had to stop because the other train was ahead of us on the tracks. The Japanese officers got out and scattered, studying the terrain through field glasses. At last, they got on their way again, with us tagging behind, but every few minutes the performance was repeated. When the train stood still in the blazing sun, it got intolerably hot inside, but still greater heat was being generated inside by the passengers, who plans were being disrupted. Some fussed and fussed. Some sat, grim-lipped. Some managed to go to sleep.

I might have been able to be patient had it not been for the thought of Wally sitting in the restaurant staring at plates of cold food. I confided in a fellow passenger, and when we stopped near a station he ran to try to send a telegram, but without success.

I think it was after two o'clock when we finally reached Peiping. Wally had given up and gone back to his room, where he was entertaining serious doubts as to whether I was the kind of person he ever wanted to see again. His anger was soon transferred from me to the national enemy. Having missed our bus to the hills, we settled for a walk around Chung Nan Hai.